



Henry John Bolland.





SERMONS.

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SERMONS

ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

BY

WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK, D.D.

VICAR OF LEEDS,
CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO HER MAJESTY,
PREBENDARY OF LINCOLN.

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QUÆCUNQUE DIXI DE TUO AGNOSCANT ET TUI : SI QUÆ
DE MEO ET TU IGNOSCE ET TUI.

AUGUSTIN. LIB. DE TRIN. C. ULT.



TO
THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,
EDWARD,
LORD ARCHBISHOP OF YORK,
PRIMATE OF ENGLAND AND METROPOLITAN,
WHO,
DURING AN EPISCOPATE OF HALF A CENTURY,
BY HIS WISDOM, BENEVOLENCE, AND JUSTICE,
HATH MAINTAINED QUIETNESS, LOVE, AND PEACE AMONG MEN,
THIS VOLUME
IS, WITH ALL RESPECT, INSCRIBED,
AS A TRIBUTE
OF ADMIRATION FOR HIS PUBLIC CHARACTER,
AND
IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT
OF NUMBERLESS PERSONAL OBLIGATIONS,
BY HIS GRACE'S
MOST DUTIFUL AND DEVOTED SERVANT,
WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK.

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF BOSTON
FROM 1630 TO 1800
BY
JOHN H. COLEMAN
OF THE
BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

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PREFACE.

THERE has, perhaps, been no age of the Church since the time of St. Augustine, when it has been more necessary than it is at present to bear in mind his own impressive sentence, that “true Religion can never rightly be instilled into the soul, except a man is first willing to believe what he will hereafter, if he is found worthy, know and understand; nor can its spirit be imbibed, except by yielding to the severe controul of authority”¹. There has never been a time when Catholic truth

¹ Vera Religio, nisi credantur ea, quæ postea quisque, si se bene gesserit, dignusque fuerit, assequatur atque percipiat, et omnino, sine quodam gravi auctoritatis imperio, iniri recte nullo pacto potest. —*De Utilitate Credendi*, c. ix.

was exposed to greater danger than it is now, in an age when that which has been taught from the beginning is too often sacrificed to the traditions of modern sects and systems, and the written Word of GOD is treated with so little reverence that it is become almost the distinguishing mark of the religious world to reject all that it does not comprehend.

Against this prevailing source of error the writer of the following Sermons has felt it to be his duty often to repeat his zealous protest; knowing that the Church, in her best and purest times, always taught her children to be content at first to take many things on trust, to wait for enlightenment by faith and prayer, and, seeking instruction from her teachers, "to follow that way of Catholic discipline which from CHRIST, by HIS Apostles, has flowed down to us, and must flow onwards to ages yet to come"¹. For nothing can be more

¹ St. Augustin, *ib.* c. viii. ad f.

destructive of Christian faith than those systems which teach the inquirer to approach the study of Revelation with distrust rather than belief, which make private opinion the standard of Divine truth, and man's finite reason the measure of the Infinite.

It must be clear, to a reflecting mind, that the true remedy for these evils lies in the restitution of the Church's authority to teach and minister the Word of God, under such laws and limits as were assigned with the first delivery to her of this trust. Where this authority is recognized, a humble, teachable spirit will be restored, and the number of good Christians "will be multiplied, walking in the fear of the LORD and in the comfort of the HOLY GHOST"¹; for they will find it more truly natural to them to confide than to dwell in doubt, and, without long questioning, they will learn to love and to adore.

¹ Acts ix. 31.

At the same time, there must necessarily be difficulties, and even danger, in the way of reviving attention to truths that have fallen into neglect, and of restoring the "proportion of the faith"¹, when it has been lost by those who preach one or more Articles of the Creed to the disparagement of the rest. In the efforts now making to reinstate the Article of the Holy Catholic Church to its proper place and due regard among Christians, it is natural that there should arise in some quarters something like a spirit of "zeal and revenge"² against the error which kept it out of view; and that those who once omitted it in their system of doctrine should now, somewhat out of measure, bring it prominently forward. It, therefore, becomes necessary to examine strictly the proper limits of the Church's authority in teaching; not to press unessential practices and customs of early times as of universal obligation, and to take care

Rom. xii. 6.

² 2 Cor. vii. 11.

that, while we believe things of Divine revelation as above reason, not to follow superstitious usages, which have in them nothing Divine, but to let our religion be, in all points, a reasonable service.

It is very probable that, professing these views, the following Sermons will be, by some persons, considered as going too far ; by others they will be censured as not going far enough. For this difference of opinion the writer is fully prepared ; for it must almost unavoidably be encountered by those who would decidedly keep the middle position, which is that of the English Church¹.

There have always been in the English Church, from the time of the Reformation, those who have thought the Reformation carried somewhat too far, and those who would have wished it to be carried further. We may call them, for the sake of distinction, the Catholic and the Pro-

¹ See on this subject Sermon XI. of the present Volume.

testant schools. The tendency of the Protestant school has been to look much to the doctrine of the foreign Reformers; to pay little regard to Christian antiquity; to accept the system of government by Bishops and the threefold Order of Ministry, but not to consider these essential to the constitution of a Christian Church; to insist much upon the Thirty-nine Articles, as the work of the Reformation, but to adhere less strictly to the Liturgy and Offices in the Prayer Book, explaining away the doctrines of Absolution and Baptismal Grace, and other Catholic truths either asserted or implied in the Book of Common Prayer. And this tendency has been much encouraged by a strong zeal against real or supposed Romish errors, and by a desire to strengthen the league against Rome through an alliance with other Protestants.

Against this school those who have held the Catholic views have ever presented what appears to the writer of these Sermons a salutary barrier.

They have been, for the most part, men who have studied the history, and caught the spirit, of the great teachers of the early Church. They have regretted that the abuse of many good things practised in early times should have led to their discontinuance; they love the remnant of primitive services which has been spared to us, and would change nothing in the Prayer Book but on the principle of restoration. They will not allow of any attempt which is made to explain away the Church's doctrine in these services; and they think it a want of charity towards Dissenters to represent their points of disagreement as non-essential, since, by so doing, they prevent earnest-minded and humble Dissenters from inquiring into the importance of such difference. While they regret the superstitious practices and idolatrous worship sanctioned by the Church of Rome, they rejoice to think that that Church still preserves in its offices many remains of better times, and that many enlightened members of that communion have kept the faith, uninfluenced by the more

dangerous errors. With such as these they regret that they are unable to unite, while the conduct of the government of that Church, imposing unprimitive doctrines as articles of faith, tends to keep up the long-existing schism. They wish for the reformation, not the destruction, of Rome.

But if there be any who, in their professed attachment to Catholic principles, would go further than this; who would have it supposed that, because both the Divines of Trent and those of our own country reformed the practices and restrained the disputes of doctrine in their respective Churches, they, therefore, both effected a Reformation on the same principles; if there be any, in short, who would explain away the Thirty-nine Articles as some have explained away the Prayer Book, the writer is not one of them. He cannot think that unity can be advanced by winking hard and closing our eyes to existing errors on either side; and it is easy to foresee that a device contrived with so little regard to the facts

of the case will share the fate of the interim of Charles V., the projects of Cassander and Grotius, and whatever other attempts have been made to promote union without unanimity.

The duty of those whose influence has preserved the Church from hasty innovation is still to persevere in the middle course in which God's Providence has placed them. They may still offend one school by insisting on a strict adherence to the primitive observances of the Church of England, without compliance with the scruples of the Protestant communities by which we are surrounded. And by those whose views go further, they will, perhaps, be despised, because they choose rather to keep within the line of the English Church, and to defend her system as true and Catholic, rather than to cast a longing aspiration after systems adopted in the middle ages, and still retained by many of the foreign Churches. But when they are accused, by some as being too Protestant, and by others as

approaching Popery, let them bear in mind, for their consolation, what is wisely said by that great Christian Philosopher, Alexander Knox: “When any one stands on a middle point, between two others, who are with respect to him strictly equi-distant, he must, from the inevitable laws of perspective, appear to both, not to be in the middle, but comparatively near the opposite party.”

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SERMON I.

SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD.

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"She hath done what she could."

THE Christian life is compared to a journey which is to be taken by a narrow way to a straight gate. "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it¹." Straight indeed has that gate been, to effect a passage through which, for Adam's polluted² race, that stupendous miracle of mercy was needful³, the Incarnation, Sufferings, and Death of the Everlasting SON of God⁴! But although a passage be now possible to the adopted children of GOD⁵, through the straight gate, the

¹ St. Matt. vii. 14. ² Rom. v. 12. ³ Psalm xlix. 7—9; Acts, xvii. 3.

⁴ Rom. v. 21; vii. 18; Art ix. ⁵ Ephes. ii. 13—18.

lintel of which has been sprinkled with the blood of the immaculate Lamb¹, still we have each of us, like our Master, to take up our cross²; nor can we reach the gate, which Faith will open to us³, until we have toiled and travelled along the narrow path⁴. And they who thus toil and travel, who desire to tread in their Divine Master's steps, find the task the more difficult since on either side of the narrow way a precipice seems to yawn upon them;—since on either side there are difficulty and danger, perhaps destruction.

Our journey is the more painful, because, to prevent a fall, we have constantly to preserve an equipoise. We have now to sway ourselves on this side, then on that, in order to avoid falling either on the one side or on the other. The gate is before us; to reach it we are to walk in a given line; to keep in that line, we have continually to be balancing this principle against that; not allowing any one principle, however important, so to oversway us as to hurry us into forgetfulness of any other principle; but, even though we may not ourselves perceive their consistency, trying to adhere to them both when both are enjoined. For example,

¹ Cf. Exod. xii. 23; 1 Cor. v. 7; Heb. ix. 14. ² St. Luke, ix. 23.

³ 1 John, v. 5. ⁴ Acts, xiv. 22.

we must ever remember our own responsibility as being, in many respects, free agents¹, and yet we must not forget GOD's predestination² to whatever it relates; we must act earnestly and labour diligently, as if all our success in all that we undertake depended upon ourselves³, and yet we are to trace every event to the special, ever-interfering Providence of GOD⁴: we are to hearken to St. Paul when he tells us that we are justified by faith only⁵, but we are to listen likewise to St. James, on the other side, when he tells us that we are justified by works also⁶; we are to submit to self-denials, austerities, and mortifications, as if the formation of our moral character rested on self-discipline; and we are to have as regular and earnest and constant recourse to the means of grace, as if every thing depended upon grace. We are to look, for justification, to faith only as the inward instrument⁷, and yet we are to have recourse to the Sacraments also as the outward means⁸: not trusting to faith without the Sacraments, nor to the Sacraments without faith, nor to

¹ Deut. xxx. 19; Eccl. ix. 10, 11. ² Eph. iii. 9—11.

³ Eccles. ix. 10; Phil. ii. 12; Col. i. 29; iii. 23.

⁴ St. Matthew, vi. 26, 30; St. Luke, xii. 6, 7, 24; 1 Samuel ii. 6, 7; Job, v. 18, and xii. 23; Isaiah, xlv. 7; 2 Sam. xvi. 5, 10, 11.

⁵ Rom. ii. 26; Gal. ii. 16. ⁶ St. James, ii. 24. ⁷ Acts, xvi. 31.

⁸ St. Mark, xvi. 16; 1 Peter, iii. 21; Titus, iii. 5, 6; St. John, vi. 53—54; Acts, ii. 42; 1 Cor. x. 16, 17; xi. 23—26.

either without repentance ; nor to any or all of these except as means of uniting us still more closely to CHRIST the SAVIOUR.

These doctrines and duties sometimes appear to stand in opposition to one another, and the mind is so desirous to have them reconciled, that to meet that desire speculative men have formed a variety of systems. This is the origin of theological schools and sects, and this it is that binds men together in schools and sects : the school or sect to which a man belongs being that which affords to his mind the easiest solution to the difficulties which arise from the opposing nature of some of our duties. It were much to be wished that men would always remember that these systems, invented to make religion more intelligible than GOD has made it in the Holy Scriptures, are merely human inventions, and that there is always danger in adopting a system, since a system is generally formed by so insisting on one great principle which may be true, as to explain away another principle which is equally true : sometimes it places a doctrine, such as justification by faith, in the place of CHRIST HIMSELF, and teaches men to suppose that if they hold certain opinions they are safe, whereas we are only really safe by being mystically united with CHRIST our SAVIOUR, by being one with HIM, so that HE is

One with us ; by being, through HIM, who is GOD as well as man, in union with GOD HIMSELF¹.

Almost all religious and ethical error is to be traced to our not endeavouring thus to balance our principles and preserve an equipoise between our duties. For instance, a man is shocked at the Calvinistic notion of Predestination, which, from Calvin's disregard of man's free agency under certain limitations, sways the moral traveller to the precipice which gapes upon him on the one side of the narrow way ; and, then, what does he do ? Perhaps, like Arminius, he so asserts the doctrine of man's free agency *without* restrictions as entirely to overlook the mystery of Predestination : one or other doctrine is overlooked by one or other party, because, instead of believing without seeking to explain, they wish to reconcile the two ; which can only be done, as far as they see, by virtually denying one. Another man sees that, without human foresight, precaution, and energy, great ends cannot be accomplished, and straightway he falls into the pit on the one side. Knowing that GOD leaves something in the power of man, he opines that GOD never interferes in human

¹ Cf. Ephes. ii. 5 ; Gal. iii. 27 ; St. John, iii. 27, xvi. 7 ; Ephes. iv. 11, 12 ; St. John xv. 5, xiv. 20, 23.

affairs: that is, he denies the doctrine of a Special Particular Providence; and, hence, if he *does* pray for those things which are “requisite and necessary for the soul, he deems it superstition to pray for the things “requisite and necessary for the body”¹. Or, again, flying Polytheism, a man worships ONE GOD and ONE only²; and then, by asserting long and earnestly this truth, he is plunged into perdition by forgetting another equally certain, that in the unity of this one Godhead there is a Trinity of Persons³; and, seeking to avoid idolatry, he becomes an idolator by paying worship to other than the GOD of Christians. Or yet again, another person, dreading the errors of popery, rushes into the opposite extreme of ultra-protestantism; and, because the Church-visible is not what Rome represents it to be, denies the existence of any visible Church whatever.

I have asserted, at some length, this general principle, for the purpose of applying it more particularly on this occasion to the Doctrine of Good Works; a doctrine concerning which most fearful errors exist on either side.

¹ Exhortation in Book of Common Prayer, Daily Service.

² 1 Tim. ii. 5.

³ Athanasian Creed. Gen. i. 26, 27; Matt. iii. 16, 17, xxviii. 19.

You are well aware that it is broadly stated by many, and perhaps it is tacitly assumed by others, that if we do all we can, we shall be quite safe ; since it is either said or insinuated, that GOD will not require at our hands an impossibility. It is said that if we do all that we can we shall be safe, no matter what our faith may be, no matter what our religion, no matter whether we have any religion at all : it is upon our conduct that all depends, and as to our conduct all that GOD requires is that we do all that we can, all that under the given circumstances we are able to do. This doctrine is sometimes formally expressed ; it is more frequently silently acquiesced in ; it is the downy pillow on which the devil would have us to recline our heads. This is really what is meant by being saved by works. It is seldom that men can be found who really suppose that by any thing they can do they can deserve Heaven ; deserve infinite happiness ; but we can easily discover, from what is said to us by persons, who, lying on the bed of sickness, would seek to palliate their past conduct, that men *do* think or *try* to think that they are safe *because* they have done what they could : they presume that GOD will not be extreme to mark what is done amiss ; and then, having done their best, or nearly so, they again presume that all will be well with them.

Now even, by a very strong licence of supposition, admitting the fact that such persons *have* done their best: *have* done *all* they could: a concession, I repeat, even for argument's sake, very difficult to grant; still, against the conclusion that for so doing they are safe, the face of our Mother the Church is set as a flint. The Scripture broadly, boldly, distinctly asserts that it is *not* by sincerely doing what he thinks to be right¹; in other words, that it is *not* by his works that man can be saved²; and as broadly, as boldly, as distinctly, does the Church declare that she has received the same, for she says, "They are to be had accursed," the language is very strong, "they are to be had accursed that presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the light of nature. For Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of JESUS CHRIST, whereby men must be saved³." Yes; HE, and HE only, is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life": Yes; "no man cometh unto the FATHER but by HIM⁴." "He that hath the SON

¹ 2 Chron. xiii. 9, 10; Saul's Conversion is also a case in point.

² Eph. ii. 9; Psalms, cxxx. 3; cxliii. 2; St. Luke, xvii. 10; Isaiah, lxiv. 6.

³ Art. xviii.

⁴ St. John, xiv. 6.

hath life, and he that hath not the SON of GOD hath not life¹." "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under Heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved²," but only the Name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. It is moreover declared, that he who will not believe, and who, therefore, by his unbelief cannot come to this only SAVIOUR, that he who will not believe will be damned³. Accursed, doomed to destruction, he came into the world, his natural course is downwards, even to perdition; he refuses, through unbelief, to adopt the only way of escape; accursed he remains, accursed he dies, and with the spirits everlastingly accursed he has his portion⁴! Nay, yet further, the Scriptures declare that from man desiring eternal life, impossibilities, that is, things that are impossible to the natural unaided man, are required, because by man under Grace, through the supernatural aid of the HOLY GHOST, they may be performed⁵. They are demanded of us, means of meeting the demand are afforded, and if we, through unbelief, will not avail ourselves of those means, we remain as we

¹ 1 John, v. 12. ² Acts, iv. 12. ³ St. Mark, xvi. 16.

⁴ Jude, 6; St. Matt. xxv. 41.

⁵ St. John, xv. 5; Phil. ii. 13; 2 Cor. iii. 5.

were ; we remain accursed creatures. Here, then, is a general counteracting principle to that of sincerity. Sincerity will not save a man ; a man will not be saved because he has done all he could. Man, to be saved, must have JESUS for his SAVIOUR ; he must have the atoning Blood of CHRIST applied to his soul ; he must partake of the spirit of CHRIST¹ ; he must have CHRIST JESUS as his Intercessor at the right hand of Power².

But when we are asserting this principle against the maintainers of the efficacy of sincerity alone, against those who would rely for salvation on their works, let us not forget that there is a downfalling on the other side ; let us be on our guard against destruction from the opposite extreme. And, in order to warn you against this error, I will now briefly consider the circumstances connected with the words of our Text.

Our LORD was in the house of Simon the leper at Bethany, and as HE sat at meat there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very precious, and she brake the box and poured it on HIS head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves ; and said, " Why was this waste of the ointment

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 13.

² Heb. vii. 25.

made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence and given to the poor¹."

Many thoughts suggest themselves to the mind on the perusal of this transaction; but it is to our LORD's reply that I am to call your attention. "And JESUS said, Let her alone, why trouble ye her. She hath wrought a good work on ME. For ye have the poor always with you, but ME ye have not always. *She hath done what she could.* She is come aforehand to anoint MY Body to the burying²."

So, then, it appears that we *can* do some works that are good, and that we are to do what we can; and that if we do what we can, we shall have a reward, not according to what we have not, but according to what we have³: yes, let us hear the holy Church again, "Albeit that good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins⁴:" no, my brethren, *that* can only be done by the merits and intercession of our SAVIOUR CHRIST — "albeit that they cannot endure the severity of God's judgment: yet are they well pleasing and acceptable to GOD⁵": yes; well pleasing and acceptable to God, but how? and when? They

¹ St. Mark, xiv. 3—5.

² St. Mark, xiv. 6—8. ³ 2 Cor. viii. 1—3. ⁴ Art. xii. ⁵ Art. xii.

are “well pleasing and acceptable to GOD in CHRIST, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith; insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit¹.”

Now so was it with respect to the pious woman whose conduct is under consideration: she had faith in CHRIST; she was HIS disciple, and as such was accepted by HIM. Her means of approaching our LORD was different from our's; she drew near to HIM in the flesh; we approach HIM in the Sacraments; but the same faith influenced her that should influence us; we approach HIM as she approached HIM: as MESSIAH, the promised SEED, the SAVIOUR, who had been foretold and now was come². And *being* thus led by faith to seek to be HIS disciple, and *being* acknowledged by our LORD as such, *then*, when she did the best she could, the best that she could do was accepted. Not such would have been our LORD's blessing had she been one of those who had not been received by HIM as a disciple. HE would, then, (if we may judge from HIS conduct on other occasions,) have said unto her, *Believe, and thou shalt be saved*³: Believe, and then, but not till

¹ Article xii.

² St. Luke, xxiv. 27.

³ St. Matt. ix. 22; St. Mark, ix. 23; St. Luke, vii. 37—50.

then, I will accept this service at thine hands. But she did believe, she had acknowledged JESUS to be the MESSIAH, and HE had graciously received her as HIS servant: and, therefore, when she did what she could, trifling as the act, considered in itself, was, what she could was accepted—and great was her reward.

We see, then, how we are to balance ourselves as we travel along the narrow path with respect to this doctrine of works. Do you encourage the unbeliever to think that GOD will not be extreme to mark what is done amiss? and so do you totter on the one side? Why should GOD *not* be extreme to mark what is done amiss by Man, when we know that HE *was* extreme to mark what was done amiss by Angels when they fell? Why should man be better than Angels in their fall? Why should HIS treatment of man be more lenient than that of Angels, who became, by transgression, devils? It is a revealed fact that there *are* mitigating circumstances with respect to man's fall; though, judging *a priori*, we cannot see *why* it should be so; at a knowledge of these mitigating circumstances we can only arrive by Revelation, and therefore if we take Revelation for our guide in part, we must take it for our guide throughout; and doing so we shall not

rely on uncovenanted mercies. No, my brethren ; cling to CHRIST, receive HIM as your SAVIOUR, your *only* SAVIOUR ; rely by faith on HIS Merits, on HIS Grace, on HIS Intercession ; let HIM be your *only* confidence.

And, then, does this bring you to the precipice on the opposite side ? Does it incline you *so* to rely on HIM as to lead you to do nothing for yourself ? Preserve your equilibrium, by remembering that what HE has done has been this : namely, HE has rendered that *possible* with regard to those who are HIS, by adoption and grace, which is *impossible* with regard to mankind considered only as the sons of Adam. He has *not* done away with our works, but HE has rendered them, what without HIM they could not be, acceptable. HE has reconciled us, unholy as we are in our very best things, to the HOLY LORD GOD ; and thus when we have done, *not* all that we *ought* to do, but all that we *could*, what we have done is accepted. The righteous *scarcely* can be saved¹, the unrighteous not at all² ; and he, we know, and he only, is righteous that doeth righteousness³. The doctrine of the Atonement is not intended to give assurance

¹ 1 Pet. iv. 18.

² Heb. xii. 14.

³ 1 John, iii. 7.

and comfort to the evil-doer, but to make even those who persevere in well doing, who do all they can, still work out their own salvation with fear and trembling¹; still to trust not in their own righteousness, but in GOD's manifold and great mercies².

The commendation, "she hath done what she could," although a high commendation, implies all this; implies much of self-sacrifice, much of self-denial. The alabaster box of ointment was *very precious*; it was the very best that could be had, and could not, of course, be purchased by a poor woman without denying herself some of the very necessities of life. She must have known, too, beforehand, that, in a wicked and perverse generation, the act she contemplated would be misunderstood by some, and misrepresented by others: she must have had to overcome all the scruples which timidity could suggest; and yet she did surmount all difficulties, *she did what she could* to testify her love to the SAVIOUR. And she herein hath set us an example that we can each one of us follow. For to this degree of excellence who among us cannot attain? There are perfections which we may despair of reaching; we may be unable to become

¹ Phil. ii. 12.

² Dan. ix. 18.

a giant in stature, or as one of the saints in practice. Be it so. But *this is* possible to each of us; we may each of us do what we can to promote the glory of our GOD, whatever may be our difficulties from external circumstances, or from inward temperament. Nothing either in earth or in hell can preclude us from this commendation, that we have done what we could to renounce the ways of sin and folly,—to please, to serve, to honor our LORD our SAVIOUR and our GOD. Our particular actions may differ; one man may *seem* more excellent than another; but by this principle all are brought so far to an equality; for the question with GOD is, not what amount of good has any one done, but whether each in his appointed sphere has done his best. Take, for example, the case of giving and receiving. Do the rich erect sanctuaries on their estates? Do they contribute largely to the adornment of churches? Do they provide for the increase of schools and religious and useful learning? Are they laying large funds at the feet of our Bishops that missionaries may be sent forth to foreign parts? When they have done all, when they have spent their thousands, their hundreds of thousands, the very highest praise that it is possible for them to obtain is that they have done all they could; and if they have *not* done all that

they can do, in the sight of HIM who seeth not as man seeth¹, they have done nothing in comparison of that poor widow² who, though it be but two mites that she cast into the treasury, in casting in these two mites, hath given her all, even all that she had, even all her living, and returns to a cold home without the food which that mite would have purchased. Her mite was her all; it looks but a trifle beside the rich man's thousands, but he, after having given his thousands, has something left, not merely for the necessities but for the luxuries of life.

She hath done what she could. My brethren, if the LORD JESUS were present,—if HE were seated before us as HE sat before this woman,—could HE say to us, as HE did to her, *Ye have done what ye could?* I speak hypothetically, whereas I ought to speak positively. For you know, brethren, the LORD JESUS *is* present; really though invisibly HE is here in HIS own HOUSE among us assembled in HIS NAME: HE is truly, absolutely present here³. These are not mere words. I state a fact. Realize it to your minds. HE is here, GOD and Man, *the PERSON* in whom the two natures are united; sympathising

¹ 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

² Mark, xii. 42; Luke, xxi. 2.

³ St. Matt. xviii. 20; 1 Cor. v. 4; Heb. xi. 27.

with us on the one hand, searching our hearts on the other. And moreover, though HE makes use of a sinful worm of the dust as HIS mouth-piece, HE it is who asks, while I speak¹: "Have you done and are you doing *all* you can to renounce and to shun whatsoever things are evil; pride and vanity, avarice and ambition, levity and fickleness? envy and hatred and malice? impurity and falsehood? Have you done, are you doing *all* that you can to keep your baptismal vow, to repel all doubts, to crucify the old man, utterly to abolish the whole body of sin², to overcome every infirmity, to preserve and cherish the gift of Grace which is in you³, which, used, may lead on to perfection; which, lost, will plunge into tenfold perdition⁴? Have you done, are you doing all that you can to make your union with GOD, through Mystical union with CHRIST, yet closer, that, so becoming more and more a partaker of the Divine Nature, you may become more and more holy⁵? Have you done, are you doing *all* that you can to obtain a clearer insight into the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven⁶, so that, having more

¹ St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; x. 40; St. John, xx. 21.

² Rom. vi. 6. ³ 2 Cor. xiii. 5. ⁴ Hebrews, vi. 4—6; Jude, 12, 13.

⁵ 1 Cor. i. 30. ⁶ John, vii. 17; viii. 43.

light, you may walk more *in* the light¹. Have you done, and are you doing all that you can to promote the glory of God upon earth²?" Here is the grand, true principle, the sanctifying principle of action, *without* which our very charities are vain, *with* which our slightest actions may become acceptable in God's sight.

It was because she was anxious to carry out this principle that the woman whose conduct is before us did what she could; and it was because they lacked this principle that the utilitarian disciples blamed her. She did what she did, she did all she could, *to glorify our SAVIOUR*. Be the same principle our's, my brethren, and let it influence us, as it influenced her, in small things as well as great. It is herein that her example preaches to us in its fullest force. It is but seldom that we have opportunities of glorifying God by making great sacrifices in His cause, and seldom would they be attended to, unless we are habituated to self-denial for this end on slighter occasions. We can discharge no duty properly until we have formed a virtuous habit; now, a virtuous habit, so far as any particular virtue is concerned, we can only form from frequent acts of virtue: but we can only practise ourselves by frequent acts,

¹ John, xii. 35, 36.

² 1 Cor. vi. 20; x. 31; 1 Pet. iv. 11.

through attending to what unwise men call trifles, since such trifles alone are of frequent occurrence¹. In spiritual things, as in temporal, we pass not from the great to the small, but from the small to the great : we must creep before we can run ; we must learn the gamut before we can understand the theory of musical sounds ; we must learn the alphabet before we can become scholars. If, then, we wish to glorify our SAVIOUR, to testify our zeal for His service, our devotion, gratitude, and love, we must remember that, as fortunes are created by making the most trifling occurrences the occasion of gain, so we must bring this principle to bear upon whatever we do ; whether we eat, or whether we drink, (even when we are engaged in what relates to the body, that part of us which we have in common with the beasts that perish,) we must do all for the glory of GOD. To glorify their SAVIOUR, they, who would have anointed His head when on earth, will assume in His House the attitude of devotion, nor ever utter the name of His humanity, JESUS², without that reverence which the Church enjoins³, to testify that HE of whom

¹ St. Luke, xii. 26 ; xvi. 10.

² Matt. i. 21.

³ Canon, xviii. A reverence and attention to be used within the Church in time of Divine Service.

we speak, though Man, is yet *more* than man, though the SON of man is also the SON of GOD. These, seeing with how much of ceremonial and observance royalty is served, will, like the woman before us, be jealous of any neglect of ceremony, any relaxation of respect, when those who “dwell in the Courts of the LORD” assemble not only to hear HIS word, not only to offer up their prayers and their praises, not only to meet their SAVIOUR in HIS Sacraments, but to do their homage to the KING of Kings. These, if they be rich, by expensive decorations; if they be poor, by such marks of respect as those we still observe at Christmas, when we adorn our churches with boughs of trees; will love to prove that they would have done what they could to glorify the SAVIOUR, by those little outward attentions which tell of a loving heart within, had they been in the flesh when HE was on earth. And thus prepared by little self-denials, and by bearing the mockery of the profane in little things, they will be ready to make large sacrifices when an opportunity to glorify their SAVIOUR on a more extended scale presents itself: when, by establishing missions, by erecting schools, by multiplying the Houses of GOD in the land, they can more directly propagate the Gospel, and open fresh channels through which the streams of Grace may flow.

But we must here again advert to what I stated at the outset, and we must be warned that there is a precipice on the other side. While we are seeking to glorify our SAVIOUR, we must remember that if HE condescends to accept, HE does not need our services¹; and, therefore, if ever, from zeal in HIS service, we purposely do but a little wrong, we shall fall into the pit². We are to remember that there is One Body as well as One SPIRIT, and we are to have regard to the Unity of the Body as well as to the Unity of the SPIRIT; and if we attempt, therefore, to promote GOD's glory in opposition to the principles of HIS Universal Church, or to the regulations of that particular branch of it under which HIS PROVIDENCE has placed us, it is to be feared that we are only self-seekers, self-pleasers, indulging merely an unsanctified enthusiasm. It is certain that we retard the object we profess to promote: instead of pleasing we displease GOD, for we displease HIM when we disobey HIM, and we disobey HIM, speaking to us by HIS Providence, when we go out of our appointed sphere and doing what St. Paul would *not* do, stretch ourselves beyond "the measure of

¹ Psalm, xxiv. 1; l. 10; Proverbs, xvi. 4; St. Luke, xvii. 7, 8, 9.

² Acts iv. 19; Romans iii. 8.

our line¹." No, my brethren, if the glory of God be really our object, we shall do what we can, in spite of the mockery of the world; but what we *can* do will be only that which the Church directs or permits; for by obedience more than sacrifice is God best pleased².

And if we determine to do all we can, let us remember for our comfort, that we *can* do every thing that God appoints, even though to man, in himself, it be a thing impossible: we can do every thing through the strengthening of CHRIST³. HIS SPIRIT, who is in us if we have not sinned away HIS grace, and finally quenched HIM—HIS SPIRIT is always sufficient for a present exigency: if a miracle be needful to rescue us from a spiritual enemy, a miracle will be wrought. Indeed, if our souls be now in a state of grace, what a miracle is HE working on us in changing into flesh what was by nature a stone⁴! Let us each set to work with respect to that which is our besetting sin, our overpowering difficulty at the present time⁵. Let us do what we can, and what is impossible to us we shall find to be possible with God⁶. And then, oh! my brethren, what

¹ 2 Cor. x. 13, 14.

² 1 Samuel xv. 22.

³ 2 Cor. xii. 9; Phil. iv. 13.

⁴ Ezek. xi. 19; xxxvi. 26.

⁵ Heb. xii. 1.

⁶ St. Mark, ix. 26; x. 27.

joy will it be to us when the day, the awful Day of Judgment having come, that day when Satan our great accuser¹ is standing near us, and is unfolding the volume to point out our offences by deed, and by word, and by thought, to detect unholiness in our holiest things; then, oh! my brethren, what joy will it be to us, to hear the LORD JESUS proclaiming, Let them alone, they have done, *not* all that they ought to have done, *but*, they have done what they could. MY Grace is sufficient for their sanctification! MY Merits for their salvation!

* Διὰβολος. Cf. Rev. xii. 9, 10; Job, i. 6.

SERMON II.

ON A PARTICULAR PROVIDENCE.

MATTHEW, VI. 34.

"Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

ALTHOUGH in the material world, when we know what once has happened, it is easy to foretel what will happen again, for the actions of God upon matter are constant and uniform; although, knowing the properties of chemical agents, we can accurately predict the different operations of an acid upon an alkali and upon a metal; although the astronomer can with precision calculate eclipses, and ascertain the periods of the planets, yet who

can foretel, with any thing like certainty, the results of human action? Here the same consequents do *not* always succeed the same antecedent circumstances; the same event does not always follow the same apparent cause.

What extraordinary combinations of circumstances, what unexpected coincidences are ever and anon occurring to perplex and confound us! How infatuated we sometimes find the wisest counsellors, and what mighty events have been brought about by the instrumentality of fools! In profane history, as well as in sacred, we hear of a hundred men chasing a thousand, and a thousand putting ten thousand to flight; if the millions of Ethiopia fled before Asa¹, by a handful of Grecians the multitudes of Xerxes were routed.

Or, to come down to individuals, while we see one man reaping the fruit of his labours, we see another, equally laborious, begging his bread. What are the dews of heaven to this man are the damps of disease to that. Saul and Jonathan “were swifter than eagles, stronger than lions²,” and yet they fell in battle. How often do we see the most prudent individual fall into the very ruin

¹ 2 Chronicles, xiv. 12.

² 2 Samuel, i. 23.

against which his most cautious measures were taken; while, perhaps, what we ourselves thought to be for our ruin has tended to our honour. Seven times more than it was wonted to be the burning fiery furnace was heated for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego¹, but it was only kindled for their promotion. Haman hangs on the gallows where he thought to see his rival suspended²; and the ministers of Darius fall into the very pit which they had prepared for Daniel³.

And yet, notwithstanding all this, that we have *some* power over future events (though the *extent* of that power cannot be ascertained) is an object of intuitive belief, a conviction of the mind which nothing can overcome—a fact which all men tacitly acknowledge whenever they resolve to act, or deliberate on their mode of acting; whenever they plight their faith to others, or induce others to plight their faith to them; a fact implied whenever the ALMIGHTY issues to us HIS commands; a fact implied in the very existence of moral evil; since, to deny that there are inferior agents in the world, and to make GOD the only efficient Cause of all that is *done*, is to make GOD the author of sin, which is blasphemy. Experience

¹ Daniel, iii. 19.² Esther, vii. 10.³ Daniel, vi. 24.

shows that HE who gave us our being, gave us also, within certain limits, the power of independent action, and enabled us to be the cause of certain events; experience shows that, generally speaking, the race *is* to the swift, and the battle to the strong; that there *is* bread for the wise, and riches for men of understanding, and favour to men of skill; and that, therefore, if we wish to win the race or the battle, we must be swift and be strong; if we wish for success in our other undertakings, we must be wise and be skilful.

What we stated before is the exception, and not the rule, but the exceptions to the rule are so very many, and so very great, that an inspired penman, in that apparently paradoxical style, which is sometimes used to startle the careless, and to set the wise on thinking, boldly affirms a proposition directly the reverse of what has just been stated, and declares "that the race is *not* to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," (*i. e.* it is not always so, it is not necessarily so,) "but that time and chance happeneth to all"¹: that is to say, that what to man may appear mere accident, occurs so very often to frustrate the wisest

¹ Eccles. ix. 11.

counsels, and to render vain the greatest strength, that he who, BECAUSE he knows himself to be strong, or swift, or wise, thinks himself THEREFORE *secure* of his end, will often find himself woefully mistaken.

Now what does all this prove? Not, surely, that man has *no* power over future events, for *that* we have already seen that he *has*; but that there must be some other agent, or agents, besides man busied in the direction of human affairs: for to suppose that anything can undergo a change without some cause for that change: that an effect can be produced without the intervention of a Being with power and will to effect it; this is a degree of scepticism at which those only have arrived who are blinded, beyond all possibility of cure, by the prejudices of sect, or the subtleties of system. And hence it has happened that those who have not possessed, or (which in this case comes to the same thing) have not used the Scripture for their guide, have in all countries had recourse to imagination, in order to account for these, otherwise, unaccountable circumstances. To what but to this are we to attribute the elves, the fairies, the ghosts, which amused the fancy or excited the fears of our ancestors? To what but to this, the demi-gods of heathen worship? Nor was the superstition peculiar to an illiterate

age, or an uneducated multitude; the Pythagorean and the Platonist believed in dæmons and tutelar deities¹.

But if such beings did actually exist, to urge upon men the duty inculcated in our text would be nothing short of mockery. The capricious qualities are well known which were ascribed to those imaginary beings, of whom our forefathers stood in awe; and the faith of the Greeks and Romans we may learn from Apuleius, who, having observed of the SUPREME DEITY that HE could not be affected with indignation or anger, that HE could not be depressed with grief or elated with joy, proceeds to remark that "every thing of this kind suits only the middle nature of dæmons, for they are placed between gods and men, as well in the frame and composition of their minds as in the situation of their abodes, having immortality in common with the former, and affections in common with the latter²." Now, admit the existence of such an order of beings who are described by

¹ See Bp. Warburton's *Divine Legation*, Book iii. sect. 4. *Plutarch De Is. et Os.* affirms this of both Pythagoras and Plato, and their followers. Chalcidias, *Com. in Platonis Timæum*, gives as the reason why the Peripatetics rejected the doctrine of a particular Providence, their denial of the administration of the inferior deities.

² *Apuleius de Diis Social.*—See the whole passage quoted in the "*Divine Legation*," Book iii. Sect. 4.

a heathen writer as “subject like us to be every way irritated and appeased, so as to be inflamed by anger, melted by compassion, allured by gifts, softened by prayers, exasperated by neglect, and soothed again by observance,” and how could we say to Man, “Take no thought for the morrow”? Surely, we ought rather to say—“Exposed as you are to the machinations of beings capricious as man, victims of the like passions, and rendered irresistible by their invisibility, despair and despond.” It is, indeed, from the very circumstance that, while admitting the fact that there is another Agent besides man interfering in human affairs, HE has annihilated these superstitions, that HE has cast down these vain imaginations, that HE has proclaimed GOD to be ALL in all, that OUR LORD delivers the injunction contained in our text, which is a necessary consequence of believing what the Scriptures tell us with reference to the subject. For they tell us that the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY Himself is ever busied in sustaining what HIS wisdom created; nothing is too high for HIS power, nothing is too low for HIS attention. HIS Providence can descend from the mightiest to the lowliest of things; from wielding the destinies of the universe to the opening of an insect’s eye to behold HIS glory; while directing the movements of angel and arch-angel HE can stoop to control

the actions of man, who is a worm ! We are taught that the “birds of the air¹,” and “the grass of the field²,” “the young raven³,” the sparrow on the house-top⁴, the very hairs on the good man’s head, are all objects of His special care⁵; that it is HE that “killeth and maketh alive, that bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up, that maketh poor and that maketh rich⁶,” that “increaseth nations and destroyeth them⁷”; “HE maketh sore and bindeth up, HE woundeth and His hands make whole⁸.” Nay, is there any evil in the city (not, of course, moral evil, but physical evil,—evil intended for trial or correction)—we are taught that it is done by HIM who saith, “I form light and I create darkness, I make peace and I create evil, I, the LORD, do these things⁹”; “when Shimei curses, it is the LORD who bids him¹⁰; when Absalom rebels, it is by GOD’s permission.

I have accumulated these passages to show what is meant in Scripture, when Scripture speaks of the Providence of GOD; to show that by Providence is meant not a general Providence, to the

¹ Matthew, vi. 26. ² Matthew, vi. 30. ³ Luke, xii. 24.

⁴ Luke, xii. 6. ⁵ Luke xii. 7. ⁶ 1 Samuel, ii. 6, 7.

⁷ Job, xii. 23. ⁸ Job, v. 18. ⁹ Isaiah, xlv. 7.

¹⁰ 2 Samuel, xvi. 5, 10, 11.

exclusion of a particular Providence ;—for a general Providence as distinguished from the *individuals* on which it *acts*, is a mere abstraction, a non-entity, a compound containing what is to be found in none of its constituent elements ; a sum without items. What, therefore, the Scriptures teach, is a special, a particular Providence : a Providence, extending, as I have said, to the minutest of things.

Perhaps one of the most important uses of the Old Testament is, that it points out to us how clearly what the world calls chance is to be attributed to Providential interposition. The veil is uplifted, and the finger of GOD is seen. Take the history, for example, of the Patriarch Joseph¹. What a chance it seemed, when his brethren were meditating his destruction, that the Midianites should be passing by that way ; what a chance that they should immediately bend their steps to Pharaoh's kingdom ; what a chance when Joseph was cast into prison that he should find as his partner in captivity a member of the royal household ; what a chance that he should immediately rise to the viceroyalty ; what a chance that his brethren should, by famine, be compelled to come into Egypt. Yea, how strong

¹ Genesis, xxxvii. xxxix. to l.

at one time were all the chances against him, when, torn from his father's house, his fondest hopes were blighted, and all his brightest prospects were dimmed : again, how ruin seemed to impend when he was hurled by his virtue from the very eminence to which his virtue had raised him. And yet it is permitted to us to see, in this instance, how his calamities only ministered to his "far more exceeding weight of glory"¹; how his greatest misfortunes were only the stepping-stones to his eventual prosperity. Never, surely, was there a history in which the subject of it was so apparently the victim of chance ; never, surely, a history in which, GOD Himself being the Interpreter, the finger of PROVIDENCE was more clearly to be discerned. It was GOD, said the inspired Patriarch himself, when addressing his brethren, "who sent me before you to preserve you a posterity on the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance, so now it was not you that sent me, but GOD"²: that is, while *their's* was the guilty act, the effect was to be traced to the overruling hand of PROVIDENCE : "ye thought evil against me, but GOD meant it unto good"³.

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 17.

² Gen. xlv. 7, 8.

Genesis, l. 20.

It is true, indeed, that the word *chance* is used in Scripture as we have heard it used in a passage already quoted¹; but there it is used to denote, not what infidels mean when they speak of chance; but, merely such accidents as have occurred contrary to the expectations and designs of men, God Himself being mediately or immediately the Cause. It is very true also that there are, above us and around us, evil spirits, and that to the minds of the impious the devil may suggest unworthy motives, while he may sometimes be permitted, as in the case of holy Job², to try even the righteous, as gold is tried³ in the furnace of affliction; there are, moreover, angels of light, who are “ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them that shall be heirs of salvation”⁴; in other words, even when acting invisibly, God may still act by second causes; but whether this be the case or not, the comfortable doctrine of Holy Scripture is that those spirits, whether good or bad, cannot stir one step without the permission of that ALMIGHTY BEING to whom all angels, principalities, and powers are subject, and by whom all things, in the severer as well as in the milder dispensations, are ordered for the good, not only

¹ Eccles. ix. 11.

² Job, i. 12, and ii. 6.

³ Job, xxiii. 10.

⁴ Hebrews, i. 14.

of the Church, the Body of CHRIST, but of each particular member of the same, who, renewed by the HOLY GHOST, loves GOD¹.

Now you will observe that the doctrine of a special Providence, as thus stated, lies between two extremes, as all truth does; between that system which denies to man *any* power and that which refuses to recognize the occasional interference of the DEITY. If we conclude that, because GOD is Omnipotent, man must be powerless, we are contradicted by *facts*, by which we are again contradicted if we deny the occasional interposition of a Superior BEING. All that we can do is to mark these phenomena, and then, for the rule to explain them, to refer to Scripture. If it be demanded how we can reconcile all this with GOD's Omnipotence, we can only reply that we are *not* concerned with the consequences of a demonstrated truth which may be *above* our reason; or we may, at all events, defer the answer until the querist has taught us to comprehend the subsistence of GOD without a beginning; HIS eternity without succession; HIS immensity without extension; HIS perpetual action without any change in HIMSELF; and those other innumerable mysteries, the clouds and thick darkness with

¹ Romans, viii. 28.

which His glory is enveloped, the too minute consideration of which, by a finite intellect, is sufficient to make a sane man mad.

Waiving, then, such considerations, I come now to the practical bearing of the doctrine, to which I especially invite your attention. Only let us once from the heart believe in the special Providence of GOD, as it has now been stated, and *then* no notions of expediency will induce us, in any single instance, to do evil that good may come; or, which is a greater trial, to fear to do good lest evil should ensue. Verily, this is the faith which makes martyrs and disarms temptation, since it makes us more careful of the means we employ than of the end we desire; since it excludes all notions of expediency, when not compatible with a sense of duty, and dismisses all those cares for the morrow, without exception, which interfere with the claims of the present time. The true Christian, strong in the faith of GOD's special Providence, and he only, is the really consistent man, whom neither the frown of the tyrant, nor the preferments of the powerful, nor the flattery of the crafty, nor the love of popularity, nor easiness of temper, nor the rage of the people, nor the calumnies of the factious, nor even the malevolence of what is called the religious world, can drive or allure from the narrow path;

who can alike defy lawless power and public opinion; that is, the opinion of the thoughtless many, as opposed to the truth possessed by the thoughtful few: he only can resolutely oppose the spirit of the age, when the spirit of the age is not in accordance with the SPIRIT OF GOD. The man of this world, amused by phantoms, and agitated by anxious forebodings, now the sport of fallacious hopes, and now the victim of groundless alarms, does at one time the very act which he condemns in another: prove to him that an act of injustice, robbery, and wrong, is expedient, and however he may lament the circumstance, the act of injustice, robbery, and wrong will be done. Far different is the conduct of the true Christian. That which is lawful may be even in *appearance* (what we know it always is in *fact*) expedient; but that which is apparently expedient may not always be lawful. When what is apparently expedient is evidently lawful, the true Christian, of course, is in duty bound to do it. But suppose what is apparently expedient interfere with a commandment of GOD, or a principle of HIS Church, the man of this world, though not, perhaps, professing infidelity or dissent, will assume to himself a dispensing power, and transgress a commandment, or violate a principle.

The Christian, on the contrary, will nobly dare to observe the same commandment, to adhere to the same principle, though it expose him to the scoff of the philosopher, and the ridicule of the worldly-wise, and the falsehoods of self-conceited folly; though it bring him to the scaffold or the stake, or draw down upon his devoted head the fierce vengeance of a lawless assembly. In vain will it be pointed out to him that such and such ill effects must necessarily result from the course he pursues; no thought for the morrow will ever induce him to do what is not sanctioned by justice, approved by conscience, and consistent with the principles of the Church for which his SAVIOUR died. He will say, "My GOD is a GOD at hand, and not a GOD afar off¹; HE is able to avert the predicted ill-consequences, and HE will avert them if it seemeth HIM good; but if not, be it known unto you, O ye men of this world, I will never worship the golden image, styled liberality, or whatever else it may be, that ye shall set up. And in the judgment of the world those who so act will be classed with madmen and fools; for in this class were once arranged the Confessors, Apostles, and Martyrs; but, mind, there is a day coming, my brethren, when much of this world's judgment

¹ Jeremiah, xxiii. 23.

will be reversed ; when “the foolishness of GOD will be found wiser than men, and the weakness of GOD stronger than men”¹, in a place where it is to be feared “not many wise men after the flesh”² will be found.

See, also, how this faith affects our judgment of actions that are passed. From evil actions good may sometimes ensue. And the wise man after the flesh thence takes occasion, at the instigation of Satan, to “call evil good, and good evil”³, by maintaining that actions generally considered wrong may, under some circumstances, be right. The renewed Christian, on the other hand, blames the wrong action without reserve, and tracing the incidental good to the moral alchemy of a superintending Providence, gives thanks for it to his GOD. For instance, it is the fashion to say that much good has accrued to the constitution of our country from the great Rebellion. Let us admit the fact, and what then? The irreligious man draws the hasty conclusion at direct variance with Scripture ; not, perhaps, that regicide is lawful, but that rebellion is sometimes justifiable ; the religious man, on the other hand, (while feeling himself at liberty, like St. Paul, to assert his own rights, and to defend them, by all lawful means,) will always

¹ 1 Cor. i. 25.² 1 Cor. i. 26.³ Isaiah, v. 20.

condemn rebellion itself, although he may admit that through the medium of rebellion, while punishing a seditious age, GOD may have produced good for posterity. Again, it is the fashion to say that much indirect good has resulted to the Church from the exertions of schismatics who have awakened the zeal of the Church; and therefore they who forget that GOD'S Providence is ever busied in educing good out of evil, would have us believe, in opposition to Scripture and the Church, that schism is no sin. The believer in Providence would rather contend that the sin of schism remains as it was, and that if from any particular schism, as is asserted, good may have incidentally come to the Church, it must be attributed to the overruling Providence of GOD, who has foretold that offences, for this very reason, must needs come, and who, in spite of the schism, permitted the tempest to be the means of clearing the atmosphere. The Christian will never consent "to put darkness for light or light for darkness, bitter for sweet or sweet for bitter"¹, by praising a wrong action, on account either of its beneficial effect, or the virtues of the agent. For this reason he will carefully distinguish between his own rule of duty and his rule of

¹ Isaiah, v. 20.

judging others, in order that while he may esteem a well-intentioned offender, he may still detest the offence: and this is the more needful, since it is one of the artifices of the devil, when good men become distinguished, to suggest for the admiration of the world those very points of character which are least to be commended.

See, again, the influence of the doctrine of a special Providence on the duty of prayer. If we believe that God *does* sometimes interfere and interpose, under circumstances apparently the most trivial, we shall most assuredly *pray* to God, whenever we have any object at heart, that by His good Providence our exertions may be rendered successful; we shall feel that whatever is worthy of our labour is worthy of our prayers; and prayer will thus sanctify our actions, while our energy of action will give excitement to our prayers. It is not, indeed, until we have a full faith in the special Providence of God that we shall really pray, as the Church teaches, for “those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as for the soul”¹, for our temporal as well as our spiritual support. Except as a religious *exercise* (which is *not* the only light in which it is

¹ Exhortation—Book of Common Prayer.

regarded in Scripture), prayer must be alike useless, if GOD *never* interferes, or if HE *always* interferes with the ordinary proceedings of Providence; and, consequently, where the doctrine of a special Providence is denied, Divine worship, as is the case, I am informed, with some heretics, consists not of supplication, but only of praise. Experience teaches the mystery that we have some influence by our *actions* over future and contingent events, and, therefore, reasoning from analogy, we ought to be prepared to believe the Scriptures where they give to our prayers a similar effect. When, indeed, we believe this doctrine, *then* we are ready to obey the Apostolic precept, and “in *every* thing, with prayer and thanksgiving, to make our requests known unto God”¹. Then, too, we see the wisdom of the Church when she commands that where two or three can be gathered together, there the sacrifice of public prayer shall day by day be made²; since, peradventure, the State may be more benefited by the prayers of our holy Mother than by all the harangings of the disputatious.

¹ Philipp. iv. 6.

² See the Directions under the head “Concerning the Service of the Church,” and the title of our Service, which is “The Order for Morning or Evening Prayer DAILY throughout the year.”

If, too, we are prepared to admit, whenever an event turns out differently from what—if with reverence I may use the expression—we had good grounds, reasoning analogically, to expect that GOD has HIMSELF interposed; then (if by the blood of CHRIST and the sanctification of HIS SPIRIT we are reconciled to GOD) we shall obey the injunction of our Text as a matter of course. The Commentators tell us that in our Text the cause is put for the effect; for, indeed, prudence and forethought are virtues which reason and revelation combine to enforce; and common sense would convince us that our blessed SAVIOUR—HE who, when hanging on the cross for our sins, bethought HIM of the agonizing morrow which awaited HIS Virgin Mother, yea, and provided for it by commending her to the care of the Disciple whom HE loved¹—common sense must convince us that HE did not intend to prohibit ALL thought for the future, but only *such* thought as would lead us to contemplate it with anxiety and alarm.

With anxiety and alarm the future must, indeed, be contemplated (if it be contemplated at all) by the unrighteous, for over them the devil may be permitted to exercise authority; he may

¹ John, xix. 25—27.

be permitted to torment them before their time, and to convert to their individual misery the very events which are overruled for the general good. But what can he have to fear who has the LORD for his GOD?¹ In public and in private life, cautious as the worldling—since it has *not* been revealed to him how or when his GOD will interfere, and since he knows that in some degree, but not in *what* degree, the happiness of the future depends upon himself—he will be industrious to do what he thinks will be eventually advantageous, diligent to ascertain the best means for the accomplishment of his end, and in carrying those means into effect. But having thus done his duty (and it is part of the duty of to-day to provide for the morrow), he will dismiss all further care from his heart, and instead of distressing himself about future contingencies, will cheerfully resign himself into the hands of his GOD—of that GOD, who, if HE careth for “the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven”², will much more take care of the redeemed in CHRIST; of that GOD who, if HE give us life to-morrow, can also with life give us the necessities of life;—of that GOD who gave His only begotten SON to die for our sins³, and who, as the Apostle argues, will

¹ Psalm, cxliv. 15.² Matt. vi. 30.³ 1 John, iv. 9.

“with HIS SON give us all things”¹. Into the hands of that blessed LORD GOD, as into the hands of a faithful CREATOR, and most merciful SAVIOUR², the true Christian will commit himself with a heart prepared to respond, Yea and Amen, to whatever by the arrangements of HIS PROVIDENCE his GOD shall decree. And if it be for the good of that man’s immortal soul that worldly prosperity should avail him, worldly prosperity he will have; for GOD does not willingly, that is, without a special object, afflict the children of men. If, on the other hand, by prosperity and success in this world, his spiritual estate will be endangered, then by Providential mercy his wisest designs may be brought to nought; and if the afflictions of the good man be severe, he will recognize therein the chastisement of LOVE, the rod wielded by the Paternal hand, and, in the deep humiliation of a subdued spirit, he will feel “What a heart must this have been, how naturally depraved, to have required such discipline as this from the FATHER of mercies, and the GOD of comfort.” Nor can such a man, in his bitterest affliction, when the deep waters have gone even over his soul³, however perplexed, be driven to despair; for not only

¹ Romans, viii. 32.

² Office for the Visitation of the Sick—Book of Common Prayer.

³ Psalm, cxxiv. 4.

will he be upheld by faith, but the HOLY GHOST Himself, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, will be his Comforter, ever ready to sanctify, control, elevate, sustain his sinking spirit; when weak to support him, when doubtful to guide him; he will be afraid neither for any "terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth at noontide"¹; "sufficient for the day" will be "the evil thereof," and he will have no "care for the morrow," while his heart can respond to the hallelujahs of the Church Triumphant, in the happy conviction that "THE LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH"².

¹ Psalm, xci. 5.

² Revel. xix. 6.

SERMON III.

PREDESTINATION.

1 PETER, II. 9.

"Ye are a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People."

OUR Blessed LORD and SAVIOUR, who is our King¹, as well as our Prophet² and our Priest³, hath sat down at the Right Hand of the FATHER⁴, GOD and Man in HIS ONE Divine Person⁵, "expecting till HIS enemies be made HIS foot-

¹ Psalm, ii. 6 ; xxiv. 10. Rev. i. 5 ; xvii. 14.

² Luke, xiii. 33 ; xxiv. 19. Deut. xviii. 15. ³ Heb. vii. 17.

⁴ Heb. x. 12.

⁵ Acts, ii. 36. John, xi. 27. 1 Cor. viii. 6. Col. ii. 9.

stool¹: but though sitting there, He is still working the work which His FATHER hath give Him to do². It is a function of His Priesthood now to intercede for His people continually on the Merits of His One Sacrifice³, just as heretofore He fulfilled the Priestly office by offering that sacrifice, once for all, the sacrifice of His own Divine Body upon the cross⁴: it is still a part of His prophetic office⁵ to superintend the accomplishment of His prophecies, and to make His word (when uttered by His Ministers⁶), “quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword”⁷; and while, as the KING of Kings⁸, He sends from the FATHER His HOLY SPIRIT to prepare His people for heaven⁹, He is Himself employed in preparing heaven for His people. “I go,” He expressly said, “to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto MYSELF, that where I am, there ye may be also”¹⁰.

Although there is, of course, much of perplexity to our minds in those unfulfilled prophecies of Scripture that relate to the kingdom which, now

¹ Heb. x. 13. ² John, iv. 34; v. 17. 1 Cor. xv. 24.

³ Heb. vii. 25; ix. 14, 25, 26, 28.

⁴ Heb. x. 10, 14, 18, 26. Eph. v. 2, 25. ⁵ Matt. xxviii. 20.

⁶ Acts, viii. 30, 31. Eph. iii. 5; iv. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 2.

⁷ Heb. iv. 12.

⁸ Rev. xix. 16.

⁹ John xv. 26; xvi. 7—11.

¹⁰ John xiv. 2, 3.

militant¹, is hereafter to be established in glory under MESSIAH the KING²: although of that mighty empire all that we behold,—all that, with the nicest apparatus of the optical art, we can bring within the field of vision,—all that cannot be so brought, but the existence of which we can only (and that but dimly) picture to ourselves, the worlds upon worlds that revolve around us, and all the intelligences by which they are inhabited,—although of that almighty empire these shall form a part, and be subject unto HIM who is the SON of Man and the SON of GOD, JESUS the MESSIAH, *by* whom are all things and *for* whom are all things³; yet from the passage in St. John which I have just quoted, and from other passages, and from the general teaching of Scripture, we gather that there is to be some place, some determinate globe, where the glory of the BLESSED TRINITY will be pre-eminently displayed; which will be, as it were, for evermore the court, the centre of unity to this Empire, of which no mind of man can conceive the glory⁴. I leave it to others to conjecture where this place shall be; I only say, from the sure

¹ Eph. vi. 12. Rev. vi. 9. Rev. xxi.

² Rev. iv. 2. John i. 3.

⁴ 2 Kings ii. 1—11. Luke ii. 5. 1 Thes. iv. 16. Eph. iii. 15.
Col. i. 5. 1 Pet. i. 4. Rev. xxi. 1.

word of Prophecy, that Heaven is not a mere condition ; we expect a new Earth and new Heavens, wherein dwelleth righteousness : this was revealed among the things that are to be, in holy vision, to St. John, who says, “ I saw a new Heaven and a new Earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea : and I, John, saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down from God, prepared, as a Bride adorned for her Husband. And I heard a great voice out of Heaven, saying, Behold the Tabernacle of God is with Men, and HE will dwell with them, and they shall be HIS People, and GOD HIMSELF shall be with them, and be their GOD”¹. Observe,—there is to be a new Earth, and new Heavens, and a new Jerusalem, a City of God ; peopled by whom ? By human beings,—by us, my brethren, I hope ; undoubtedly by beings such as we are ; *if* with *spiritual* Bodies, (mysterious as that expression is,) *still* with *Bodies* ; Creatures existing in Bodies as well as having Souls resident in those bodies ; actual men, though their vile bodies shall be changed like unto CHRIST’s glorious Body² ; as it was seen in its glory on the mount of Transfiguration³ and after the

¹ Rev. xxi. 1, 2, 3.² Phil. iii. 21.³ Matt. xvii. 2. Mark ix. 2.

Resurrection¹; not unclothed but clothed upon, mortality being swallowed up of Life, the corruptible putting on incorruption, and the mortal putting on immortality². To prevent the possibility of our imagining all this to be a mere allegory, the square or cubical figure of the new Jerusalem, and the three geometrical dimensions of length, breadth, and thickness, which appertain not to things merely spiritual, but which imply things material³, are given⁴. At the same time, (as if to prevent our supposing that because it is to be of the same nature as the things with which we are now conversant, it will therefore only be such as we now see,) its extent is described as enormous beyond all calculation; it is described as having a length and breadth and height so vast as to surpass the limits of the atmosphere of our Globe⁵. It is important to dwell on this latter fact, lest our ideas should be low, grovelling, or inadequate on a subject which the Scriptures offer for consolatory meditation to the Christian looking on to futurity; nor is it less important that we

¹ Mark xvi. 14. Luke xxiv. 36, 51.

² 1 Cor. xv. 52, 53.

³ Luke xxiv. 39.

⁴ Rev. xxi. 10 et seq.

⁵ Rev. xxi. 16.

should remember that it is with things material and corporeal, though Oh ! how different in glory from what we now behold ! that we shall have to do. Matter is not, as the Heathen imagined, in itself an unholy thing, the creation of the spirit of evil. No, like man himself who is connected with it, it was created by the HOLY LORD GOD, and at its creation pronounced to be "very good"¹. But when man transgressed the holy law of GOD, the curse of its CREATOR fell upon the world of matter as well as upon the human soul, and, as a penalty of man's sin, the very ground was cursed². One thing declared by the Incarnation of the SON of GOD ; by the fact that the Second PERSON of the Blessed TRINITY has taken unto HIMSELF and united with HIS GODHEAD not only an immaterial Soul, but also a material Body³, is this : that matter is not, *in itself*, unholy ; that matter can be and has been sanctified, to the highest, to the holiest purposes, even to union with the great GOD HIMSELF. And it is doubtless with reference to this fact, and as a type of future things, that the Church has been accustomed to consecrate her edifices⁴ and her sacred

¹ Gen. i.² Gen. iii. 17.³ 1 Tim. iii. 16. Heb. ii. 14, 16. John, i. 1, 14.⁴ Ezek. v. 11. Jer. vii. 30. 1 Cor. xi. 22.

utensils, and to impart to them a character of holiness, by blessing them in GOD's name, and thus expecting GOD's blessing to rest upon them. By that blessing the original curse is taken off from them, and they prefigure those material things in the world to come, *through* which the redeemed ones will render their homage to GOD Most High¹, and *by* which, the Most High GOD may impart a portion of that happiness which is to be their's for evermore². It is thus for a *City* that we are to look, though it be "a City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is GOD"³: it is thus that we "desire a better country, that is, a heavenly"⁴; it is thus that we are to expect a building of GOD, an House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens⁵: and it is thus, too, that we are to remember that they who shall exist in that heavenly abode, will exist *not*, as the Heathens dreamed, absorbed into the DIVINITY, as a drop of water loses its own distinctive character by falling into the ocean and becoming absorbed and lost in one vast whole, *but* as individuals, as distinct individual Persons⁶.

¹ Rev. xiv. 2; xv. 2.

² Matt. xxv. 46. 2 Cor. iv. 17. Luke xvi. 9. 1 Cor. ii. 12.
Heb. vi. 5.

³ Heb. xi. 10,

⁴ Heb. xi. 16.

⁵ 2 Cor. v. 1.

⁶ 1 Cor. xiii. 12; iii. 8.

Now, my Brethren, it is a most blessed fact that to the glories of this kingdom we are predestinated; we, you and I, are predestinated¹. Let us examine the subject.

It is quite impossible to read the Scriptures and not to see that there are some persons predestinated to glory; and it is certain that this doctrine would not be found in Scripture unless it were "profitable for doctrine, or for reproof, or for correction, or for instruction in righteousness"²: it is equally certain that we are told by the Church that "the godly consideration of predestination and our election in Christ is full of sweet and unspeakable comfort to godly persons"³: and it is moreover certain that it can be full neither of profit nor of comfort unless we meditate upon it: and if it be among the things "hard to be understood," and which *may* "be wrested" to our "destruction"⁴, this is no reason why we should not try to understand it, and, by understanding it, cease to be "unlearned and unstable," and so take care that it shall *not* be wrested to *our* destruction. Let us, since this is so, examine the subject, and may the blessed SPIRIT of GOD be with us while we thus seek illumination!

¹ Cf. Titus, i. 1, 2; ii. 15.

² 2 Tim. iii. 16.

³ Art. xvii.

⁴ 2 Peter, iii. 16.

In the first chapter to the Ephesians we find that there are certain persons whom GOD hath chosen in CHRIST before the foundation of the world; having predestinated them unto the adoption of Children by JESUS CHRIST, to HIMSELF, not on account of their good works, but according to the good pleasure of HIS will¹. Again, in another Epistle, we are told that GOD hath “called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to HIS own purpose and grace, which was given us in CHRIST JESUS before the world began”². These are persons whose names are said to have been written in Heaven, in the Book of Life, called the LAMB’S Book of Life³, because the first among GOD’S elect is HE who, being GOD as well as MAN, is the LAMB of GOD, slain from the foundation of the world⁴, as a propitiation for sin⁵.

Thus, then, we see that there are Persons who, in the words of St. Paul, are vessels which GOD hath afore prepared unto Glory⁶.

And now comes the question, *Who* are those who are thus predestinated to the glories of the New Heaven, the New Earth, the New Jerusalem

¹ Ephesians, i. 4, 5.

² 2 Tim. i. 9.

³ Rev. xx. 15; xxi. 27.

⁴ Rev. xiii. 8.

⁵ 1 John, ii. 2; iv. 10.

⁶ Rom. ix. 22, 23, 24.

which is to come down from above¹? Let St. Paul give the answer: "Whom he did predestinate, them HE also called"²; called by the Circumstances under which HE providentially placed them, either by the appearance, in the first ages, of an Apostle or an Evangelist, or, as is the case with us, by the fact of our being born in a Christian Land; and "whom HE called, them HE also justified"; receiving them for Christ's sake as HIS own Children in Holy Baptism, HE justified, or, for the same SAVIOUR's sake, *counted as holy* those who as yet were not actually so; and "those whom HE justified, them HE also glorified"—HE glorified them by regenerating them and making them temples of the HOLY GHOST³; than which what greater glory can pertain to the Sons of Men?

The foregoing passage furnishes us with a description of Christians, of baptized Persons, and consequently to Christians we are to refer those other Passages which relate to God's Predestination; *them* GOD hath predestinated to Glory. And as such, as God's elect People, predestined not merely to means of Grace, for this were clearly inadequate, but to glory in the Kingdom of Glory, the inspired writers were wont to address the multitude of the Baptized.

¹ Rev. xxi. 2.² Rom. viii. 30.³ 1 Cor. vi. 11, 19.

Thus the Apostle addresses the Church of the Thessalonians, good and bad commingled, as knowing their Election of GOD¹. Thus St. Peter speaks of “the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,” as “elect according to the foreknowledge of GOD the FATHER”²; and he speaks of them afterwards in our text as “a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, a holy Nation, a peculiar People”; and St. Paul in the Epistle to the Hebrews addresses the Hebrews, meaning those who had made profession of the Christian faith, as “holy Brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling”³.

Such, then, is our blessing, our privilege, our high hope as Christians. What will become of others, of those who have never heard the name of CHRIST, we know not, though we may be quite certain that by a GOD of mercy they will be dealt with in mercy, for it is expressly declared that HE, the Blessed SAVIOUR, who is a Propitiation for *our* Sins, is a Propitiation “not for our’s only, but for the Sins of the whole world”⁴. Although none can be saved except through an application to them of the Saving Merits of the Atonement⁵; yet by some means to us unknown the Atonement

¹ 1 Thess. i. 4.

² 1 Pet. i. 2.

³ Heb. iii. 1.

⁴ 1 John ii. 2.

⁵ John xiv. 16. 1 Cor. iii. 11. Acts iv. 2.

may be applied to the Heathen who have never heard of CHRIST. I am not now considering the question of the Salvability of the Heathen, I only say that if they escape perdition, they will nevertheless not be in the same position as those who have been justified by faith; they, if they are to have *any* place in the world to come, are not predestined to *that* place which is preparing for such as having been saved by grace are justified by faith¹. It is a fact, we see it with our eyes, that GOD does make a distinction: he makes a distinction between the Heathen who have never heard the name of CHRIST and the Christian. The latter has high privileges which the former has not. The Christian has GOD's Word to guide him, but not only this, he has also the HOLY GHOST dwelling in him; he can reach to higher degrees of excellence here; and Reason would surmise that he is intended for higher enjoyments hereafter. What Reason surmises, Revelation asserts. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which GOD hath prepared". For whom? for the Heathen? No, but "for them that love HIM"², which the Heathen

¹ 1 John v. 11, 12, 13. 2 John 7, 9, 10, 11.

² 1 Cor. ii. 9, and the passage quoted by St. Paul, *Isaiah* lxiv. 4, is equally strong. The Heathen cannot be said to "*wait for*" God.

cannot do, for how can a man love a Being of whose very existence he is ignorant? and what knows the Heathen of God, *the* God, God the Blessed TRINITY?

This, then, is the first, the foundation blessing of Christianity, in which we may humbly rejoice, and according to which all spiritual blessings are dispensed: it is the first link in that golden chain of glory which is to raise man from Earth to Heaven; the first round of that Ladder up which Man is to ascend to God, as Angels descend to Man¹.

But we may proceed yet farther. Our Blessed SAVIOUR tells us that there are many Mansions in his FATHER'S House², comparing the House that is to be, to that which existed on earth while he yet tabernacled with men. In the Temple of the first Jerusalem there were a variety of chambers or mansions, employed for different purposes, though all relating directly or indirectly to the service of the Sanctuary. In the New Jerusalem, which will itself be the Temple of the Universe, there will in like manner be many mansions or chambers: but, if so, those mansions or chambers in the earthly Jerusalem, having been intended for a variety of different offices, we may con-

¹ Gen. xxviii. 12.

² John, xiv. 2.

clude that offices of different characters will exist in the New Jerusalem. It is very possible that we are not only each of us predestined to Heaven; but predestined also each to our particular place in Heaven, that our very mansion is fixed.

We know that GOD has predestinated particular persons to particular offices here on earth, long before their birth; as, for example, in the case of Jeremiah, GOD saith, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth of the womb I sanctified thee; and I ordained thee a Prophet unto the nation"¹. And so with respect also to St. Paul we are told that it "pleased GOD to separate him from his mother's womb that he might preach CHRIST among the Heathen"². Nay, we find that this is really to be the case with respect to the next world, in some cases at least; for example, when the SON of MAN shall sit on the Throne of HIS Glory, the Apostles shall sit on twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel³; a particular office is allotted to them; to a particular office they are predestinated. When the mother of Zebedee's children prayed that her children might sit the

¹ Jeremiah, i. 5.² Gal. i. 15, 16.³ Matt. xix. 28,

one on the right hand and the other on the left in our LORD'S Kingdom of Glory, our LORD said, "to sit on MY right hand and on MY left is not MINE to give"¹. No. These places are designed for certain persons who are preparing, or shall be prepared, to fill the same. This is already fixed in the Counsels of GOD. These places, therefore, are not MINE to give. They are already given. Your place is also designated; prepare for it by doing your duty. We know that some of the Saints are predestinated to a mysterious office, the nature of which we cannot understand, but they will judge angels². And at the Last Day, "shall the KING say unto them that are on HIS right hand, Come, ye Blessed Children of MY FATHER, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"³. On referring to the Sermon on the Mount, we find that to particular virtues here on earth correspondent blessings are promised hereafter; the "poor in spirit," the "meek," the "mourner," the "pure in heart," the "peace-maker," the "persecuted for righteousness' sake," every man shall receive his own reward, according

¹ Matt. xx. 24.

² 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.

³ Matt. xxv. 34.

to his own labour¹. And thus while all who shall be admitted into Heaven will be in bliss, yet as there is one Glory of the Sun, another Glory of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars, for one star differeth from another star in Glory, so also is the Resurrection of the dead²; each is predestinated to his appointed office, and in the discharge of the duties of that office he will find his happiness and his glory.

This, then, my Brethren, is what we may believe: that GOD of HIS free Grace, the GOD who will render an account to no man, but “will be gracious to whom HE will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom HE will show mercy”³, hath been *most* gracious, *most* merciful to us, undeserving sinners as we were and are. We *might* have been heathens, born where the glad sound of the Gospel is never heard. We *are* Christians; we have been called, elected into the Church of CHRIST; we have been endowed with CHRIST’S SPIRIT; we have been predestinated to Glory in the Kingdom of Glory; and though we do not each know what our precise position in this Kingdom of Glory shall be, yet we have each a place; a place to which we are predestinated.

¹ Matt. v.

² 1 Cor. xv. 41.

³ Exod. xxxiii. 19. Romans, ix. 15.

Let us derive from these thoughts the comfort they are calculated to convey, let this assurance elevate us, as it ought to do, in the scale of being, let it lead us to regard ourselves as strangers and pilgrims upon earth preparing for an everlasting home.¹ If we be humiliated by the thought that, except for the Humiliation, Sufferings, and Death of the SON of GOD we could never have been raised from the pit of destruction², that we are only safe as we cling to HIM by faith³, still, in that exaltation which HE has effected for us,⁴ let us “rejoice and be exceeding glad”; let us set our affections, then, where our real treasure is⁵; let the hope of the Glory to which we are predestinated, solace us in our sorrows, render our labours the more vigorous, and suggest patience to us under all adversities. But while this view of this great subject is thus consolatory and encouraging, still bear in mind that it does not follow that we shall *obtain* the station to which we are predestinated; for though we *are* predestinated, it is on certain conditions. We shall receive what we ask for in prayer. Always? No; not when we ask amiss⁶. We shall be justified freely, not for our

¹ Heb. xi. 13. ² Rom. iii. 9, 12, 23. Gal. ii. 16.

³ John, iii. 36. Rom. v. 1, 2.

⁴ Eph. ii. 6.

⁵ Col. iii. 2. Matt. vi. 20, 21.

⁶ James, iv. 3.

own righteousness, but for the Merits only of CHRIST; *but this not* without faith¹: we may drink of the waters of Life without money and without price²; *but not* unless we “*come*” and “*buy*”; not unless we draw near; not unless we approach them³. And so we are predestinated to glory, *if*, on the day of trial, *if*, at the day of Judgment, we be found *prepared*, and by the sanctification of the HOLY SPIRIT *qualified* for that place which CHRIST our SAVIOUR is preparing for us.

We are predestinated to everlasting honor in the Kingdom of Glory, when that Kingdom shall in glory be established; but we must be first prepared⁴, and proved⁵, and judged⁶: we are predestinated to “enter into the joy of our LORD,” *but not* if the JUDGE shall say, Thou art a wicked and a faithless servant. No. His words will be, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy LORD,” “inherit *thou* the Kingdom prepared for thee”⁷. That the possibility of our *not* obtaining what is predestined for us ought always to be mentioned, when this Doctrine is enforced, to

¹ Heb. xi. 6.² Isaiah, lv. 1.³ James, iv. 8.⁴ Rom. vi. 5, 6, 7, 11. Tit. ii. 11, 12. Jude, 21.⁵ 1 Pet. i. 4, 5. Jude, 23, 24. James, i. 3.⁶ Matt. xii. 36. 2 Cor. v. 10.⁷ Matt. xxv. 21, 34.

prevent its being a dangerous downfall¹, is clear and obvious, else why such frequent allusion to the possible rejection of Christians (of those, that is to say, who have been glorified by being called to the means of Grace) throughout the Scriptures of the New Testament. Let us take the case of the Twelve Apostles. "Rejoice," says our Lord to all of them, "rejoice that your names are written in Heaven"—observe, the names of all. A throne in Heaven was predestined for each; each Apostle was predestinated to sit on a Throne in the world to come, and to assist in judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel. This we know. They were predestined to the means necessary to prepare them on earth for their Throne in Glory: intercourse, namely, with their LORD when he was in the flesh. They were predestined to the needful trials; worldly disappointment first, and then worldly loss. *Each* of the Twelve was predestinated; but will Judas Iscariot, who was *one* of those thus predestinated, will *he* obtain his Throne? Will *he*, the most accursed traitor of a traitorous generation, judge that generation—rule over his brethren? No; for in the trial of himself he failed. And, perhaps, the record of his self-

¹ *Precipitium*—a place over which we may fall. Art. xvii.

destruction¹ is preserved to us for this very reason, that, though in ordinary cases we may not judge, yet by the fact of his dying in mortal sin² we might be permitted to anticipate in our minds his judgment, and thus understand how a man *may be* predestinated to high honors, and yet, instead of obtaining them, *through his own fault* be a castaway. Such St. Paul, a predestinated man, feared he might be³: thus, though “many are called,” we know that “few” will be “chosen”⁴: thus we are to “give diligence to make our calling and election sure, for *if*,” says St. Peter, “ye do these things ye shall never fall”⁵. *If*—that *if* implies that those who have been called and have been elected, *if* they make not that calling and election sure, *will* fall. Precisely the same is said by St. Paul: “Behold the goodness of GOD towards thee; goodness *if* thou continue in His goodness”; and he gives us the opposite conclusion: “otherwise thou shalt be cut off”⁶. Who, indeed, is to be saved? Not he who is predestinated, but he who, having been predestinated and then subjected to trial, shall endure unto the end⁷. “Therefore,” the Apostle

¹ Acts, i. 17, 18.

² 1 John. v. 16. Cf. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; and Exod. xx. 13.

³ 1 Cor. ix. 27.

⁴ Matt. xx. 16.

⁵ 2 Pet. i. 10.

⁶ Romans, xi. 22.

⁷ Matt. xxiv. 13.

warneth us, “let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall”¹. “Hold that fast which thou hast”—this great gift which GOD hath given thee—“that no man take thy crown”². What, indeed, is this world? What, but a world of trial? But it is a world of trial to whom? To them that be “heirs of salvation”³. But if it is a world of trial, they who are tried may fail and may fall: the heirs of Salvation may therefore fail and fall. And again, for what purpose is there to be a Day of Judgment? The very object is to ascertain who *have* failed, who have fallen; and many will be the stripes with which those will be beaten who knew their LORD’S will and did it not⁴; awful the sentence to those Christians, those predestined ones, who, having been found wanting, will hear the JUDGE say, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire”⁵.

It is with reference to this doctrine that the great GOD compares us to the clay and HIMSELF to the Potter. “We are the clay, and thou our Potter; we are all the work of thy hands,” says the Prophet Isaiah⁶. And in Jeremiah the same comparison occurs: the Prophet was in the Pot-

¹ 1 Cor. x. 12.

² Rev. iii. 11.

³ Heb. i. 14.

⁴ Luke, xii. 47, 48.

⁵ Matt. xxv. 41.

⁶ Isaiah, lxiv. 8.

ter's house when the Word of the Lord came unto him, saying "O House of Israel cannot I do with thee as this Potter? Behold, the clay is in the Potter's hand, so are ye in MINE hand, O House of Israel"¹. "And the Potter hath power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel to honor and the other to dishonor"². This is what has been asserted in this discourse, and, without asking for any explanation, we rejoice to know that our names are written in Heaven, and that we are vessels intended for honor. But when the vessel intended for honor, designed for the use of the Sanctuary, hath been moulded in the Potter's hand, what does he then proceed to do? He places it in the furnace, that it may be both tried and prepared; and if it abide the trial and preparation, he expends more pains upon it, and places it in the situation for which it was designed; but if it fail, if it prove to be unable to abide the fiery trial, he then casts it away. And precisely thus does the Apostle teach us to argue with respect to ourselves: "In a great House," saith the Apostle, "there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honor and some to dishonor. If a man, *i. e.* a Christian man, therefore, purge

¹ Jer. xviii. 3, 6.² Rom. ix. 21.

himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for his MASTER'S use, and prepared for every good work"¹. Now, this is precisely what we have been saying: first, the vessel is designed for its use, then it is tried and prepared; if under the trial it is purged, it will be exalted to the high use for which it was designed; if otherwise, it will be cast into outer darkness.

I have not brought forward this subject to explain it, or to do away with the difficulties with which every doctrine of religion must be surrounded, now that we only see darkly and only know in part²: I have only desired to show you what it is; what GOD hath revealed on the subject, and how we are concerned with it. I say that every doctrine is involved with difficulties; we cannot comprehend the subsistence of GOD without a beginning, or HIS eternity without succession, or HIS immensity without extension, or HIS perpetual action without any change in HIMSELF: all these are facts which we hold, because they are revealed, without thinking of the metaphysical difficulties which they involve; and metaphysical difficulties may be involved in this doctrine of Predestination, but they are *no* difficulties to the Christian walking by faith; and before him I lay this doctrine, that he may regard

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21. ² 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

it with the mingled feelings which all the doctrines of religion are intended to create ; with mingled feelings of fear and joy, that he may rejoice and yet tremble : yea, let us rejoice that our names are written in Heaven, and tremble lest by our own misdeeds they may be obliterated from the Lamb's Book at the Day of Judgment. And I have also laid it before you because of its very great practical utility. It is most important that we should understand that we are each predestined to a high mansion in the world to come, and that we are each placed here precisely in that situation in which we may be best prepared for our everlasting resting place, our eternal office whatever that office may be. We are, I say, placed in this world, whether in riches or in poverty, in health or in sickness, whether high or low in worldly station, precisely in that position by the discharge of the duties of which at the present time we are at the present time best able to prepare ourselves for our everlasting state. You could not prepare yourself so well for your particular Mansion in the Jerusalem which is to come down from above as in the station in which you now are : our stations like our trials may change, but the station in which, by the leading of GOD's Providence, we find ourselves, is the best station in which we

could be with reference to our future prospects, while it indicates the kind of duties in which we are to exercise ourselves, the trials by which we may best be tried. It is thus that joy is sometimes sent to us that we may be exercised by joy ; sorrow, that by it our hearts may be softened : by both processes we are prepared, and by both we are tried, sorrow and joy being our preparation, and not sinful in themselves, but sinful only in their excess.

And, again, we see why it is that here below the All-wise CREATOR has ordained that men should come into the world with tempers, dispositions, and powers of mind so varied and so varying ; or, which is nearly the same thing, why they are placed under circumstances which may be said to form them before they arrive at years of discretion. Of different tempers, dispositions, and powers of mind, the ALMIGHTY has determined that there shall be need in the Mansions which CHRIST is preparing for us. And HE predestinates us to those dispositions here on earth in our probationary state, that, by the assistance of reason and the aid of HIS HOLY SPIRIT, we may fit ourselves for their heavenly use hereafter, while the abuse of them is threatened with everlasting punishment. Our

tempers and our passions, like our joys and sorrows, are not sinful in themselves; they become sinful, because sinful men do not control them and direct them as they ought to do: it is by controlling, by directing them all to the Glory of GOD, that in them, as in every thing else, we may find both our preparation and our trial.

Let the Glory which is awaiting us, and to which we are predestinated, elevate our characters, ennoble our thoughts, extend our views: co-heirs we are with CHRIST Himself, who is our Head¹; vessels we are, designed for high honor²: we are of the Household of the KING of Kings³: we are a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, a peculiar People, called out of darkness into marvellous light⁴. It is said that those of royal blood, though exiled from their kingly state and dwelling with the outcasts of society, are still distinguished by their royal bearing, and by a certain royalty of mind. So be it with us: though toiling in a wicked world, let us show by our heavenly bearing that, if denizens

¹ Rom. viii. 17. Eph. i. 22.

² Rom. ix. 21.

³ Heb. iii. 6.

⁴ 1 Pet. ii. 9.

of earth, we are citizens of Heaven; that we belong to a higher race, and aspire to what earth cannot give or the Sons of Earth conceive¹. Let us rejoice in our privileges: let us meditate on the approaching Glory: *but* let us rejoice with trembling, and let us walk with caution—*for we may* be cast away!

¹ Isaiah, xxvi. 12. John, xiv. 27. 2 Cor. i. 12.

SERMON IV.

ON SACERDOTAL BENEDICTION.

ST. LUKE, X. 5, 6.

"First say, 'Peace be to this house,' and, if the Son of Peace be there, your Peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again."

THE subject of Sacerdotal Benediction is one of much importance, and the value of it ought to be well understood, since the authority of pronouncing it is assumed as decidedly in the Church of England as in the Church of Rome: in some instances our very forms of Benediction are the same.

How solemn is the form of Benediction in the office of Confirmation; how solemn the form in the office for the Solemnization of Matrimony;

how solemn that form which is usually pronounced upon the people at the conclusion of the sermon, and which is, in fact, the concluding blessing at the Eucharist.

It would seem to be an evasion to speak of the Benedictions as only modes of Prayer, for it would be difficult in that case to provide an answer for the objection, ‘Why, then, adopt so very ambiguous and questionable a form?’ And the fact that so to speak is only an evasion, is proved by another fact that by those who do not recognize the authority of the Clergy to pronounce these Benedictions, the form is sometimes changed so as to give it the character of a Prayer; and it is said, ‘*May* the Peace of GOD which passeth all understanding keep your hearts.’ But the subject is placed above all question when we come to consider the forms of Absolution, which are, next to the Sacraments, the highest forms of Sacerdotal Benediction. You are familiar with the form of Absolution which occurs in the Morning and Evening Service, wherein it is expressly declared that “ALMIGHTY GOD, the FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, hath given power and commandment to HIS Ministers to declare and pronounce to HIS People, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins”; and wherein, moreover, the Priest blesses

the People by the words, "HE pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe HIS Holy Gospel." HE—GOD—does so now, even at the time that the Priest, HIS Minister, pronounces the words upon the faithful penitents, HIS People; just as peace was, upon given conditions, hereafter to be considered, to rest upon the household saluted by the Apostles in our Text at the very time they pronounced the Benediction. You are also most of you acquainted with a similar form in the office for the Holy Communion, which seems to suffice for those persons who do not require *special* comfort and counsel, although it shews the opinion of the Church that Absolution is a needful preparation for the Holy Eucharist. You have, perhaps, some of you, sought consolation in sickness by "humbly and heartily desiring" the minister who has attended you to pronounce upon you the absolution which we find in the "Order for the Visitation of the Sick." It is thought by many that this absolution is stronger than that which is pronounced at Morning and Evening Service. But if you give the full force, as in honesty you ought to do, to the words, "HE pardoneth and absolveth," in the latter form of Absolution, it would appear that the one form

is as strong as the other. If the form in the "Order for the Visitation of the Sick" be more unpopular than the other, it can only be because it cannot be so easily evaded or explained away by those who wish to minister in the Church, and yet reject the doctrine of Sacerdotal Benediction as un-Protestant. The form in the "Order for the Visitation of the Sick," which is part of that Book of Common Prayer "to all and every thing contained and prescribed" in which every Clergyman of the Church of England must declare his "unfeigned assent and consent," runs together with the preceding Rubric thus: "Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession, the Priest shall absolve him, (if he humbly and heartily desire it) after this sort: **Our LORD JESUS CHRIST**, who hath left power to **HIS Church** to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in **HIM**, of **HIS** great mercy forgive thee thine offences: and by **HIS** authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the **FATHER**, and of the **SON**, and of the **HOLY GHOST**. Amen."

Such is the form. It is in vain to say, as it sometimes is said, that this form of absolution is obsolete; a fact which the practice I would hope

of a large proportion of my Brethren would disprove. For, be that as it may be, here it is: it forms part of that book, to all and every thing prescribed in which every English Clergyman gives his unfeigned assent and consent: here, I say, it is, for better or for worse, part and parcel of our Book of Common Prayer. No individual, nor any number of individuals, of whatever order in the ministry, short of a general Synod of the English Church, can get rid of it, any more than of the Athanasian Creed, even if they would. Let the consequence be what it may, here, in our Prayer Book, to which we have assented and consented, that Absolution is as strong as any which is prescribed by the Roman Church for the use of the Clergy who are in communion with her. It is absurd for us to suppose that by shutting our eyes or by hiding our heads under a bushel, that which is thus set on a hill will not be seen by others, and be by them either censured or praised as it accords with the doctrine they hold upon the subject upon which it bears. Any individual may send for his Parish Priest, and if that individual “humbly and heartily desires it,” that Parish Priest must pronounce on him this Absolution. The Minister who, from conscientious scruples refuses so to do, by that act declares himself to be incapable of discharging the

duties of a Priest in the Church of England, and ought, therefore, to retire from his charge. For the Church consists of the Laity equally with the Clergy, and the Laity may not be deprived of their privileges on account of the prejudices of individual Clergymen. If the Minister think proper to explain away the force of these expressions, he is at liberty to do so, but still he is obliged, at the humble and hearty desire of his more consistent Lay Brother, to pronounce the Absolution in the form prescribed, and the efficacy of the blessing, whatever it may be, depends not upon the Minister's intention, as the Romanists vainly talk, but on the act itself. I say not at present *what* that efficacy may be; I only wish to bring strongly before you the fact: to try to evade its force is dishonest; it only remains for members of the Church of England to examine the doctrine which it implies.

With respect to the modes of evading the fact which have been adopted by some, I will, in passing, make an observation. It is said of these as of other Benedictions that they merely express a benevolent wish or more ardent prayer. As I have observed before, if such be the case, it is hard to discover why that prayer or that wish should not be expressed in a less equivocal form. It may be an edifying ceremony, it is said, to

pronounce these words, but they can do nothing, they can convey nothing; and yet if they do nothing, if they convey nothing, it would be difficult to discover in what the edification consists.

But we must view the subject in a stronger light. What a censure is by these assertions passed upon the English Church! Here are certain Forms—*mere* forms as it is pretended, possibly edifying forms, because expressive of good will, but still merely forms. They are, indeed, old Catholic forms, which have existed ever since there has been a Church in England; yet, to some men of serious and devout and earnest minds, they have given very great offence—such offence as often to drive them into open schism. And yet they are retained, and have been retained through every revision of our Liturgy. They were, as I have said, in our formularies before the Reformation; *at* the Reformation they were still retained; at the Hampton Court and Savoy Conferences they were preserved; and, by the merciful Providence of our God, they have been handed down to us. Now the Church regards schism as an offence¹; and yet, according to this hypothesis,

¹ “From all false doctrine, heresy, and schism, from hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word and Commandment, Good Lord deliver us.”—*Litany*. See also *Canons* ix. x.

for the sake of a mere form, she has driven men to commit this offence. Can any thing be imagined more cruel than this? For a mere form is the weak brother to perish¹? We must, indeed, conclude either that the Church of England has acted unjustifiably in obstinately retaining this form of ordination and these forms of absolution to which I have referred—forms, revolting to the ultra-Protestant mind and offensive to every one not trained in the school of Catholicism—or we must come to the conclusion that they are not *mere forms*, that they are means of grace—means through which the Church interposes in the degree She is appointed to interpose between the soul of the individual and his God².

Now that they are not regarded by the Church as mere forms is clearly evident, because, in ordaining a Priest, the Bishop gives to the person ordained the power to remit or retain sins, and, to qualify him for so doing, confers upon him the gift of the HOLY GHOST. Let us look at this subject, also, fearlessly and honestly, since it is one of the points of attack upon the English Church by the Protestant sects around us; and it is fair

¹ 1 Cor. viii. 11, 12.

² Eph. iii. 10, i. 22, 23, ii. 19, iv. 4—6.

1 Tim. iii. 15. Acts ii. 47.

neither to them nor to ourselves to evade the force of expressions so plain as those to which I refer.

In the office for the "Ordering of Priests"¹, which office forms a part of that same book to which the Clergy give their unfeigned assent and consent, you will find the following words: "The Bishop with the Priests present shall lay their hands severally upon the head of every one that receiveth the order of Priesthood, the receivers humbly kneeling upon their knees, and the Bishop saying: *Receive ye the HOLY GHOST for the office and work of a Priest in the Church of GOD, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands*: whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained. And be thou a faithful dispenser of the Word of GOD and of HIS holy Sacraments, in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST"².

¹ Impugners of the ordinal are thus dealt with in our eighth Canon: "Whosoever shall hereafter affirm or teach that the form and manner of making and consecrating Bishops, Priests, or Deacons, containeth anything in it that is repugnant to the Word of God * * * * * let him be excommunicated *ipso facto*, not to be restored until he repent and publicly revoke such his wicked errors."

² The "Form and Manner of Ordering of Priests,"—*Book of Common Prayer*.

It is not my purpose to remark on the various methods adopted to evade the impression which these expressions convey to honest and unprejudiced minds. To such minds it will be abundantly obvious that (whether scripturally or not, which is another question hereafter to be answered,) the Bishop assumes the power of conveying the HOLY GHOST to the person he ordains; and for what purpose, but to enable him to do that which the Church, in the order for the Visitation of the Sick as well as at other times, commands him to do, namely, to remit sins or to give absolution?

You see our position. The Church in her Ordination Service provides that power may be given to her Priests to remit or retain sins: in her absolutions and benedictions she defines the mode in which this power is to be exercised.

Wise in their own conceits¹, men may consider the Church rather than themselves to be in error, and so quit the ministry of the Church: but while they are in the Church, the Minister in that Church asserts this doctrine and assumes this power.

But we, my Brethren, are, I hope, honest and conscientious members of the Church, and it becomes us, therefore, fully to examine this

¹ Romans xii. 16.

important question. We cannot deny that a blessing is authoritatively given; authority to give it having been previously conveyed: let us answer our opponents, not by seeking to evade the force of words so plain, but by explaining to them the nature of the blessing thus conveyed, and the limits within which it is confined. For this purpose I have selected the words of our Text as that passage in Scripture which seems to me to throw great light upon this subject.

In order fully to enter into the meaning of that portion of Scripture, I shall place beside it the parallel passage in the Gospel of St. Matthew: "And when you come into a House salute it, and if it be worthy, let your Peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy let your Peace return to you"¹. And the whole transaction may be narrated thus: The Apostles were commissioned by our blessed LORD and SAVIOUR to go forth to "the lost Sheep of the House of Israel"; and, as they went, they were to "preach, saying, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand"; but this was not all; after delivering to them certain directions for their guidance, HE gave them another measure of authority in the words which have

¹ St. Matthew x. 12, 13.

just been read; as if he should have said, "When ye, acting as Ministers appointed by ME to a certain work, come, in the execution of this commission with which I have entrusted you, into a house, to discharge the functions of your spiritual office, salute that House, by saying, "Peace be to this House";—Peace, that is, to those who dwell within its walls.

Here, then, we have this fact before us: Our blessed LORD and SAVIOUR, the great HEAD of the Church¹, bestowed upon his Apostles the power to bless in his name.

And now let us observe the nature of the Blessing itself. The Apostles, you perceive, were directed by our LORD to bless the House which, in the discharge of their ministerial duties they happened to enter, by saying "Peace to this House." Now, what is meant by Peace? To suppose, as some have done, that the words were to be used as a mere passing compliment, sounds profane when we remember by Whom the injunction was given, and is inadmissible when we consider the context. For, under certain circumstances, we see that, *as they spake the words*, Peace (whatever that may be,) was to "rest upon the House," and under certain other

¹ Eph. i. 22.

circumstances, although they spake the words, the Peace was to "return to them again," that is to say, it was to be of no avail. It is obvious, then, that by their pronouncing the words prescribed they conveyed a blessing and that blessing was Peace.

What, then, I ask again, is meant by Peace? We cannot understand by this word in this relation inward satisfaction and calmness of mind; for it is evident that this could be neither increased nor decreased by the Apostolic Benediction: if the men were not easy in conscience before the words were uttered, it is not pretended they could be made so by the mere utterance of a formula. Nor, again, would the mere utterance of this formula make them to be at peace with those of their neighbours with whom they may have been before at variance. Besides, if we have that Peace which results from a conscience at ease or from inward satisfaction, it is our own Peace, not another's. But of the Peace here spoken of, our LORD says to the Apostles it is *your's*, and they were to give it to others: "*your* Peace shall rest upon it." It is *your's*; God has given it to you that you may give it to others. You have something to convey to others in the shape of a blessing, which something they will not possess until you convey it

It remains, then, that the Peace which the Apostles were to convey as a blessing, is that Peace of GOD which passeth all understanding; that Peace which is promulgated between the CREATOR and the Creature, when the ALL HOLY LORD GOD is reconciled with man who is by nature unholy. Such Peace can only be effected by the great Atonement of the Cross; it is by the application of that Atonement to individual souls that those souls are brought into communion with the MOST HIGH, who thus, through Grace, becomes at peace with them.

This blessing, the result of the Sacrifice of the Cross, the Apostles were commissioned in the case before us, by anticipation, to confer.

And now let us again view our position: the Apostles were commissioned to bless: as they spake they were to convey a blessing: that blessing was peace; and by peace we mean reconciliation with GOD.

But although, there, in that house which the Apostles saluted, the SPIRIT of GOD was especially present to confer the promised blessing, and to give the Peace which HIS Ministers pronounced, did the blessing alight on all alike? Were they *all* benefited by the Benediction? Judas Iscariot was thus commissioned by our LORD: but suppose Judas

Iscariot, immediately on his receiving the commission, had passed to the House of Caiaphas, and suppose that for thirty pieces of silver upon that hard heart he had pronounced the words of Benediction, would Caiaphas have received the blessing? Most assuredly not; for what saith the LORD: "If the House be worthy, let your Peace come upon it, but if it be not worthy, let your Peace return to you"¹; and in what the worthiness consisted we learn from our Text: "If the Son of Peace be there, your Peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to you again." Now to understand what is meant by the Son of Peace, we may consider the meaning of a more common phrase, "A child of wrath"; by a child of wrath, we mean one deserving wrath; in like manner, children of disobedience are disobedient children; and so a Son of Peace is a similar Hebraism to express a person prepared to receive the blessing of Peace, prepared for reconciliation with God. Those prepared to receive the blessing were to receive it as the Apostles spake; their speaking was the form through which it was to be conveyed; but if they to whom they spake were not so prepared the blessing was to be pronounced in vain, "Your Peace shall turn to you again."

¹ St. Matthew, x. 13.

And thus though Caiaphas had given his house full of silver and gold, yet Judas Iscariot, though he bore the commission to bless, was unable to that soul, unprepared to receive it, to convey the blessing.

It seems now to be easy to apply this principle to the subject before us.

We see that the Church of England considers that the Successors of the Apostles possess an authority, like the Apostles themselves, to bless in Christ's name; and that they convey an integral portion of the same authority and power to the Clergy of the second order, who act in subordination under them. Neither does the Church assume this without the warrant of Scripture. The commission to which our Text refers was of a temporary nature: but we find that commission renewed and extended in the twenty-second and twenty-third verses of the twentieth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John.

Having constituted the Apostolical or Episcopal College, our blessed LORD breathed on its members, and in their corporate capacity thus addressed them: "Receive ye the HOLY GHOST: whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained." Such was the high and solemn commission which, at a period subsequent to that

referred to in our Text, our Divine HEAD delivered to the blessed company of the Apostles whose authority to bless in His name was thus ratified: and whose power of transmitting the same commission to others, who were to follow in continual succession, "even unto the end of the world"¹, is sufficiently implied in his having told them: "As my FATHER hath sent ME, even so send I you." For none will deny the power here exercised to be, in a certain sense, derived from the FATHER², and if so, those sent by HIM as HE was sent by the FATHER, had in like manner the power of handing on their office³.

I am aware, of course, that there are some who dispute the continuance and permanence of this commission, alleging that it was confined to those first Apostles who were endowed with miraculous powers, and who, as our opponents say on their own mere assumption of the fact, were enabled by the force of these powers to discover who were or who were not worthy of the blessing before they pronounced it! Into an examination of these arguments I shall not, because it is unnecessary, enter: for I address exclusively the Members of the Church,

¹ Matt. xxviii. 20.

² Heb. v. 5.

³ John, xx. 21. 2 Tim. ii. 2.

and to a doctrine very different from this they give their assent and consent; the Bishop, as we have seen, employing, in the form of ordination, the very words used by our blessed SAVIOUR, and so handing down the commission to bless in CHRIST'S name which he has himself received.

So far, then, the analogy holds: the Apostles were commissioned to bless: the Clergy now are commissioned to bless. The blessing of the Apostles effected a reconciliation between GOD and man under certain conditions, conveying the peace of GOD to their souls. And is not this the very same blessing which the Ministers of CHRIST are now empowered to convey? What is the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, what but the application of the Atonement to the sinful creature's soul?¹ What but the bringing of that soul to peace with an offended GOD; or, rather, what is it but the instrument by which GOD renders HIMSELF at peace with the sinful creature who seeks HIM?² In this holy Sacrament creatures who were born children of wrath, are, as the Catechism teaches us, converted into "children of GOD"³, into beings with whom, through

¹ Acts, iii. 38; xxii. 16. 1 Cor. vi. 11. John, iii. 5.

² Rom. viii. 15, 6. Isaiah, xlv. 3. Titus, iii. 5.

³ "Wherein" *i. e.* "in my baptism," "I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven." *Church Catechism.*

grace and for a crucified SAVIOUR's sake, God is at peace¹. And what is the Holy Eucharist? Let St. Paul give the answer. "The cup of blessing which *we* bless is it not the Communion of the Blood of CHRIST, and the Bread that *we* break is it not the Communion of the Body of CHRIST"²? In other words, it is the means, by uniting men to CHRIST, and, through HIM, with GOD, of conferring upon men, under certain conditions and circumstances, the Peace of GOD³. They, then, who are commissioned to administer these two great Sacraments, by that very circumstance are commissioned to do that which the Apostles were appointed to do in our Text only the more efficaciously as the Kingdom of CHRIST is more fully developed and established; in other words, they have power to remit or to retain sins, since the sins of those who, under certain conditions, receive the Sacraments are, by that act, remitted by God; while from persons excommunicated the Eucharist is withheld, and their sins, in consequence, are, while they are excommunicated, retained.

¹ Matt. xix. 14; xvi. 16. 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, 14, 27. Gal. iii. 27.

² 1 Cor. x. 16.

³ John vi. 53, 54. 1 Cor. xi. 23, 26. Acts ii. 42.

But this is not all: the penitent and faithful heart, ever conscious of the indwelling of sin¹, ever conscious that sin cleaves to our holiest things, is continually anxious to have the Peace of GOD conferred upon it, even when opportunity does not occur of approaching GOD in the Holy Communion: indeed, regarding the blessed Eucharist, in the words of our Church, as “a holy mystery,” and, dreading to “approach it unworthily,” a penitent may wish to receive this pardon from GOD even before he draws near to the altar. This tenderness of conscience our Church would not repel; for, although she does not *enjoin* private confession and absolution, she still permits and encourages it in that first solemn exhortation in which warning is given of the intended celebration of the Holy Communion². You will there find the Minister directed to address the congregation thus:—
“And because it is requisite that no man should come to the Holy Communion but with a full trust in GOD’s mercy and with a quiet conscience, therefore, if there be any of you who,

¹ Rom. vii. 14, 18, 23. Gal. v. 17. Prov. xx. 9. 1 John i. 8, 10.

² Office for the Holy Communion.—*Exhortation in the Book of Common Prayer.*

by this means, cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me or to some other discreet and learned Minister of GOD's Word, and open his griefs, that, by the ministry of GOD's Holy Word, he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with Ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience and the avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness." By the ministry of GOD's Word is evidently meant the application of that Word by the mouth of the person officiating to the soul of the penitent by some one or other of the formulæ which the Church provides for that purpose. At all events, you have already heard what those forms of Absolution are ; you see in them the full force of the Sacerdotal Benediction. You see how by them a blessing is conveyed, and that blessing is the Peace of GOD—reconciliation, through Christ, with an offended MAKER.

The grand objection to this doctrine is usually stated in the form of an indignant exclamation : " Do you mean to affirm that this *formality*, this sprinkling of water, this eating of bread, and drinking of wine, this verbal Absolution and Sacerdotal Benediction, can really change a man's position ? " " No," it will be said, with an air of triumph, " it is to the heart that GOD looks ; if the heart be right, if it be instinct with the vitality of

faith, nothing more is needed: if the heart be depraved, all the priestly Benedictions of the Universal Church can do it no good."

Now, from what has been before stated, you will at once perceive that it is only to the first part of this proposition that we object, while to the latter part of the sentence we do most cordially say, Amen. It is true, God looks to the heart; it is *not* true that therefore faith is *all* that is necessary. No. If to the first part of the above proposition we were to assent, how should we be able to understand that portion of Scripture which has given rise to these remarks? If the principle were admitted that because God looks to the heart; HE does not require the interposition of the Church's forms, it would follow that our most blessed SAVIOUR laid an injunction upon his Apostles and made them a promise, for no object and with no meaning! We find the injunction of our LORD upon the Apostles, and (as the Church understands it,) upon their successors to be that they should in HIS name, and acting in HIS behalf, bless HIS People; and we find HIS promise on their doing so to be that a blessing should really come upon the parties blessed, provided they were duly qualified;—on these words the stress is to be laid: *duly qualified*: a blessing to the Son of Peace; no blessing to the

child of disobedience. So was it in the Apostles' time, so is it now. The Sacerdotal Benediction will be of avail to none except to those who are leading a life of repentance; for without repentance, without an honest intention in all things to serve the LORD, there is that within which repels grace.¹ Again, the blessing can be of avail to those only who have faith, for faith is the pre-requisite on our part for the reception of any spiritual gift from God.² We may in some measure understand how these things may be by a reference to the operations of nature. The sun is shining in the firmament, and we may possess certain instruments by which to direct its rays to certain objects: the rays of light are there, bright, clear, beaming: but if we dart them upon media which have no capacity to receive light, to those objects we direct those rays in vain, and the light returns to us. If, on the contrary, the objects are capable of receiving light, although they receive it from us, pointed to them from the pure source of light above us, yet the degree of light admitted depends upon the purity and transparency of those substances which we have illuminated. The

¹ Luke xiii. 3. Acts iii. 19. 1 Cor. x. 21.

² Heb. xi. 6.

light comes from the source of the light, the sun itself; it is directed by us to a specific object, if that object is capable of receiving light it is illumined, if otherwise it remains dark; and this not because our instruments do not convey light, but because we have applied them to wrong objects. And so we bless: the blessing comes from the SOURCE of all Blessing: *we* apply it, through the instruments with which the Church provides us, to particular persons; if those persons be capable, if their souls are softened by repentance and qualified by the presence of faith to receive grace, by grace they are penetrated, and they are blessed¹: if they be impenitent and unbelieving, the benediction is inoperative.

Or take another illustration. If he who was once a traitor, and as such was exiled from his country, has become loyal in heart and patriotic in his intentions, he is qualified to be restored to his forfeited privileges—but *is* he so restored? Surely he is not reinstated in his rights as a citizen until the will of the Sovereign has been signified to him according to a certain form. On

¹ Matt. iii. 8. Mark i. 15. Luke xvii. 15. 1 John iv. 7—12.

2 Cor. vii. 10, 11. 1 John ii. 9, 10. Heb. x. 22. 1 Pet. i. 7, 8.

his restoration, it might be, in one sense, true to say that his known loyalty was the cause of his restoration; or it might be said that the altered will of the Sovereign towards him was the cause; or it might be said the observance of a certain prescribed form was the cause. So when the penitent is brought back unto "Mount Sion, and unto the city of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to JESUS the MEDIATOR of the New Testament, and to the Blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel"¹: in one sense he is brought by faith; in another by the will of God; in another sense by the form in which that will is conveyed to him. In each case, neither the inward qualification without the outward form, nor the outward form without the inward qualification would suffice. And, again, if the man returns in the one instance to his treasons, in the other to his disobedience, his past pardon will avail him nothing, it will only conduce to his greater condemnation and severer punishment.

¹ Heb. xii. 22—24.

Or take one more instance. If all things be made ready for the feast, but the unfortunate person who is bidden to the feast has no appetite, but nauseates his food, then the banquet has been spread in vain. But, on the other hand, if the guest had the necessary appetite, if his stomach were craving for food, this desire would not support his nature; food must be still provided, the difference being that, before, he was unable to partake of what now becomes his sustenance. You see at once the application. Neither Sacerdotal Benedictions nor the Sacraments convey grace, except to persons hungering and thirsting after that righteousness which is of God¹: but, then, it does not follow that those who do so hunger and thirst stand in no need of that spiritual aliment by which the spiritual appetite is appeased, and by which the spiritual life, to which the cravings of that appetite refer, is sustained².

Now, this union of an external form with certain internal qualifications, in order to be secured of the peace of God, is precisely what we should expect when we refer to the economy of Grace and the analogy of the Faith.

¹ Matt. v. 6. 1 Peter, iii. 20, 21. Col. ii. 12.

² Cf. Rev. vii. 16, 17; xxi. 22, 23; whence it is clearly to be inferred that *here* forms and ordinances are necessary.

What, indeed, is the foundation of the whole Gospel scheme of mercy? What but the lamentable and admitted fact that we are, by nature, poor, lost, sinful, accursed creatures, who can be justified only by something external to ourselves, yea, only by the merits of the LORD JESUS CHRIST?¹ As with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond, is sin written on the tables of our hearts²; we can merit nothing except perdition; "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified" in the sight of God³. One Name, and One only, is given under Heaven whereby we can have Salvation, and that name is the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST⁴. Yet while this fact is pressed upon us by almost every variety of expression, it is a fact which the Devil is ever seeking to drive from our minds. Even faith itself, that sole justifying principle *within us*, is sometimes so perverted that men almost rely upon it as meritorious, and exalt it as the *one good work*; nay, as though it were a Saviour in itself. Now, what one thing is so calculated to prevent our relying upon any thing that we either *do* or *feel*, as a *due* regard for external ordinances. Peace or

¹ Cf. Supra.

² Jer. xvii. 1, 9.

³ Rom. iii. 20.

⁴ Acts iv. 12.

reconciliation with GOD is a free gift from GOD¹. We have it not till HE gives it. We have no spiritual gift until HE has conferred it upon us from without. We may have the qualification, we may thus have some portion of Grace, but we have not the Gift of Peace until we have it imparted to us in the outward ordinance². And if that ordinance be in itself too insignificant to be supposed to have any intrinsic value, we see at once the wisdom of its appointment, since it leads us not to rest on *it*, but, through it, to realize our union with CHRIST, and so to look to GOD, whose appointment only has given to it its value. Aliens as we are, by nature, from the family of GOD, attainted traitors to the KING of Kings; when restored by Grace to the adoption of sons, not only must the feelings of filial duty and devoted loyalty predominate in our hearts, but even, while we ascribe those feelings to the gracious influences of HIS HOLY SPIRIT, we must *prove before men and angels*, before the Church militant and triumphant, we must keep it ever before our own mind's eye, that it is owing to nothing but to GOD's sovereign, undeserved mercy, through

¹ James i. 17, 18. John iv. 10. Eph. ii. 8.

² Cf. Cases of Cornelius and the Gaoler; both believed, but to secure the gift of Peace they must be baptized.

CHRIST JESUS, that we are permitted to hope for pardon and Peace; and we must do this by taking out that Pardon, and having that Peace sealed to us, under the appointed Form.

Thus a due regard to ordinances is the surest preservative against all feelings of self-justification, the surest means of elevating the soul, because it takes us not only from reliance upon our works but from self-contemplation, and carries the mind continually to the ONE, the only SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST, and HIM crucified¹: to HIM whose Cross is the fountain of all virtue and Grace, the Sacraments and benedictions of HIS Church being the channels through which the streams of mercy flow to those who are Sons of Peace.

Who among you, my Brethren, may be the Sons of Peace, and who are not, it is not for us to say or to surmise. But this we do say, that, even though you be a Son of Peace, you still need God's forgiveness; and that forgiveness is conferred upon you by the words of your fellow-sinner, if that fellow-sinner be acting as the commissioned servant of your GOD; and he is so acting when in Church the Absolution is pronounced—that Absolution which to those who are not Sons of Peace is as rain upon the rock, or

¹ Gal. ii. 20. Col. i. 20; ii. 14.

sunshine on the desert; but which to the humble, believing soul is as dew upon the springing blade, or as the warmth of autumn to the already whitening fields.

When you bring your child to be confirmed by the Bishop, as the Bishop lays his hand upon that young child's head, though the act be the act of man, yet the Divine blessing attends that act (if your child be a Son of Peace) simultaneously; but if he be not, the blessing shall turn to the Bishop again. When you kneel, yourself, at the holy altar, as you eat the bread and drink the wine, if you be the Son of Peace, CHRIST is imparted to you for the strengthening and refreshing of your soul. When you are lying on the bed of languishing and of death, and receive the Absolution from him who ministers to your spiritual necessities, if you are the Son of Peace at that time, GOD declares HIMSELF, by the act of HIS Minister, at peace with you; though the words be void words, if addressed to the unworthy child of disobedience.

And so, my beloved Brethren, you may understand the difference in this respect between public and private worship, between those ordinances which you discharge for yourselves in private and in your families, and those which devolve exclusively upon persons ordained to minister in

Sacred Things. You will, consequently, I hope, not be among those who, if there be no sermon, neglect to attend the services of the Sanctuary, because, as we but too often hear it alleged, "they can pray as well at home as at church." You will understand that your business in private devotion is to prepare your hearts, to exercise them by repentance¹, by faith, by fasting², by study of Scripture³, by meditation⁴, by prayer⁵, by charity or love⁶, by almsdeeds⁷; and then, when thus prepared, not relying on your repentance, not relying on your charity, not relying on your faith, but acknowledging yourselves to be unworthy of the least of the favors of God⁸, you will come here, to GOD'S House, to pray, but not *only* to pray, to hear GOD'S Word read and expounded, but not only to hear; you will come here, because *here* the Peace of God is on the Sons of Peace conferred by GOD Himself through the means and by the agents of HIS own appointment⁹. You will come, a poor conscience-stricken spiritual leper, to say "LORD make me clean"; and you will hear CHRIST say, by HIS Minister

¹ 2 Cor. vii. 10.² Matt. vi. 18. 1 Cor. vii. 5.³ Acts, xvii. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 16. ⁴ Gen. xxiv. 63. Ps. iv. 4.⁵ Phil. iv. 6. Eph. vi. 18.⁶ 1 Pet. iv. 8.⁷ Matt. vi. 1. Luke, xi. 41.⁸ Luke, xvii. 10.⁹ Is. ii. 2, 3.

and in HIS ordinance, "I will; be thou clean"¹. You will come here as to the place where the Light shineth, where the Beams of Divine Blessing are spread around, and you will go hence to your home enlightened and blessed by the SPIRIT of GOD, and renewed by HIM to re-engage in those struggles in which your spiritual warfare consists², and to prepare for greater blessings by bringing your souls under a stricter discipline³, and by rendering them, through the grace you have already received⁴, more pervious to those rays of glory which are about to shine upon you, when you shall be called to other and more enduring realms⁵!

¹ Matt. viii. 3.² Gal. v. 17.³ Tit. ii. 7.⁴ Matt. xiii. 12.⁵ Rev. xxii. 5.

SERMON V.

THE PALACE OF THE KING OF KINGS.

1 CHRONICLES, XXIX. 1.

"The Palace is not for Man, but for the LORD GOD."

SUCH was the idea attached to the Temple by the Sons of Israel, and in this opinion and estimate they were encouraged by their whole system of polity and their whole form of worship. The Tabernacle in the Wilderness had occupied a like place in their thoughts and affections. The Tabernacle was, indeed, a moveable Temple, as the Temple was a stationary Tabernacle. While the Israelites were wanderers in the wilderness the Tabernacle was erected in the centre of

their encampment¹; that is to say, by DIVINE Command, it stood in that relative position in which, among other nomadic tribes, the pavilion of the Chieftain was raised. The design of this arrangement was to impress upon the minds of the Israelites that their's was a THEOCRACY, and that JEHOVAH was their KING². This seems to have been the leading object of their ceremonial. The Jewish Ceremonies had reference, not as some Commentators think, to the rites of Idolatrous Worship, but, evidently, to the Forms according to which the Eastern Monarchs were served. Thus, as in the pavilion of a Chieftain stood the chair of state, so in the innermost apartment of the Tabernacle, and afterwards of the Temple, stood the Throne of GOD between the Cherubims, with the Ark for HIS footstool. In like manner, as though it were provision for a King, the shewbread was placed on a gilded table in the ante-room, and incense was burned before it³; and as at a Royal Festival, at stated times the Courts of the Divine Palace resounded with music⁴. It is manifest that all was done to convince the people that GOD was present among

¹ Numbers i. 50; iii. 23, 29, 35, 38.

² Psalm, xliv. 4.

³ Lev. xxi. 6, 8, 17. Numbers, xxviii. 2. Deut. xxiii. 4. Ezek. xlv. 7.

⁴ 1 Chron. xvi. 42. 2 Chron. vii. 6. Dan. iii. 5, 7, 10, 15.

them, in a manner different from that in which HE was elsewhere present—present, even as their KING¹. Here, in HIS Palace, the OMNIPRESENT LORD GOD had promised to be *especially* present, and here HE had covenanted to meet HIS chosen People: “Let them make ME a Sanctuary, that I may dwell among them”²—this was his command—“and there will I meet them”³—this was HIS promise. And the duties enjoined upon the People were strictly consistent with this: they were, as dutiful subjects, to repair at certain times to “the Palace which was not for man, but for the LORD GOD.” Three times in the year, at least, they were commanded to appear before HIM, that so appearing they might do their homage⁴.

The Israelites attended the services both of the Tabernacle and the Temple, to offer sacrifices and to pray, to ask for God’s blessing and to be blessed; but, amid all this, they never lost sight of the idea that GOD was present among them as their Sovereign RULER, and, by natural consequence, they constantly recognized their duty to render to HIM, through the ceremonies of the Law, the homage of subjects. It is an idea with

¹ 2 Chron. v. 13, 14.

² Exod. xxv. 8; xxix. 45. ³ Exod. xxv. 22; xxix. 42; xxx. 36.

⁴ Exod. xxxiv. 24. Deut. xxxi. 11. Exod. xxxiii. 7.

which the Psalms abound ; and so fondly was it cherished, that when our SAVIOUR was on the Earth, they had almost forgotten that the Temple was also the House of Prayer ; the House of Prayer for all nations¹, though the Palace in which the “royal Priesthood², the peculiar People³, were to meet their Divine KING. In the Synagogue they could pray as well as in the Temple⁴; in the Synagogue the Scriptures were read⁵; but they never thought that this exempted them from appearing before JEHOVAH in HIS Palace. And this, by the way, accounts for the conduct of the Apostles and the first Jewish Converts. They frequented the Temple⁶; but they did not go there to take part in the sacrifices, all typical sacrifices having been superseded by the “ONE full, perfect, and sufficient SACRIFICE, OBLATION, and SATISFACTION for the Sins of the whole world,” once made upon the Cross⁷. But the Temple was, as long as it stood, the Palace of JEHOVAH, and, as such, the Israelites resorted to it. It was the notion of this their distinguishing privilege that made the Jews so jealous for their

¹ Isaiah lvi. 7. Matt. xxi. 13. Mark xi. 17. Luke xix. 46.

² Exod. xix. 5, 6.

³ Deut. iv. 20 ; vii. 6, &c.

⁴ Matt. vi. 5.

⁵ Acts xv. 21.

⁶ Acts ii. 46 ; iii. 1 ; xxi. 26.

⁷ Prayer of Consecration, Office of Holy Communion.

Heb. ix. 28 ; x. 12, 13, 14, 26.

Law ; so jealous of that Gospel which, according to our LORD'S instructions¹, opened to all the baptized the privileges hitherto restricted to the Sons of Israel.

Such, then, being the idea which the Tabernacle and the Temple were calculated and intended to convey, we do not wonder when we read of the loyalty and zeal with which the willing-hearted Subjects of JEHOVAH, brought their "bracelets and earrings, and rings and tablets, all jewels of gold," and "their blue and their purple and their scarlet and their fine linen"², when they were commanded to erect the Tabernacle ; we do not wonder that David, who was a man after GOD'S own heart³, in that he knew his place and regarded himself, not as an independent Prince, but merely as the Viceroy of the KING of Kings⁴, should feel ashamed to dwell in a House of cedar, while the Ark of the LORD dwelt within curtains⁵ ; we do not wonder that when he designed the Temple, he determined it should be "exceeding magnificent of fame and of glory throughout all countries," and that he should prepare for it "an hundred thousand talents of gold and a thousand thousand talents of silver, and brass and iron without

¹ John, iii. v. ² Exod. xxxv. 5, et seq. Acts, xiii. 22.

⁴ 1 Sam. xiii. 14. ⁵ 2 Sam. vii. 2. 1 Chron. xvii. 1.

weight”¹: we do not wonder to read that Solomon “garnished the House with precious stones, and overlaid the beams and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof with gold, and that he graved cherubims on the walls”².

But when, with these examples thus recorded “for our learning”³, we propose that Christians should emulate this conduct of the Sons of Israel, we find many who are prepared to contend that, since the Jews lived under a Theocracy, their case is not parallel with our own. It is alleged that although the idea of paying homage to their KING was necessarily connected with Jewish worship, yet since we do not live under a Theocracy, it is not of necessity so with us. But here assumption is offered where *proof* is sought.

We, in reply to the assumption, urge that, under a Theocracy, we Christians do live; that the Theocracy, though changed in some of its details and more widely extended, has not, under the new dispensation, ceased to exist; that there is still an Israel of GOD, even the Visible Church; and that over HIS people Israel the SON of DAVID reigns, according to the promise which was made to David through the prophet Nathan⁴.

¹ 1 Chro. xxii. 5, 14.

² 2 Chron. iii. 7.

³ Rom. xv. 4. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

⁴ 2 Sam. vii. 12. Psalm, ii. 6.

In order to console David for not being permitted to erect the Temple, a promise was made to him that his house and his kingdom should be established for ever before GOD¹, under that SEED of his who was to be pre-eminently the SON of GOD, for the LORD said, "I will be HIS FATHER and HE shall be MY SON"². And a clearer insight into the nature of that kingdom was vouchsafed to David when, speaking of the MESSIAH, who was, after the flesh, to be the SON of David, he calleth HIM LORD, and foresaw that HE would send the rod of HIS strength out of Zion and rule among the Heathen; that HE would rule in the midst of enemies; and that HE would for a season withdraw from the earth, sitting at GOD's right hand until HIS enemies should become HIS footstool³. So deeply graven was this truth upon the mind of the Psalmist, the sweet singer of Israel, that, according to the traditional interpretation of the Jews, the word King in the Psalms is always intended to apply to the MESSIAH, except when otherwise restricted by the context.

And so imbued was the popular feeling of the Jews with this fact, that when Isaiah was commissioned to declare, more explicitly than

¹ 2 Sam. vii. 16. In our version the words are "shall be established for ever before *thee*." But Kennicot reads ME for thee.

² 2 Saml. vii. 14.

³ Psalm cx.

preceding Prophets, the mystery of the Atonement, when he was directed to exhibit a suffering MESSIAH, the Victim as well as the Priest of the human race, the LORD in mercy vouchsafed to shew to the Israelites that this other fact was by no means inconsistent with what they had been taught to believe of the glories of the MESSIAH'S Reign. The Prophecy which commences with the 52nd Chapter of Isaiah announces of the MESSIAH that HE shall prosper, that HE shall be exalted and extolled very high, or, as the passage is sometimes translated,

Behold MY Servant, (the MESSIAH) shall reign prosperously,
HE shall be high and elevated, and very exalted¹.

Of the kingdom over which the MESSIAH was to reign, Daniel was commissioned more particularly to prophecy: "I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the SON of MAN came with the clouds of Heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought HIM near before HIM, and there was given unto HIM dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the people, nations, and languages should serve HIM: HIS dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and HIS Kingdom that which shall not

¹ Hengstenberg on Isaiah lii. liii.

be destroyed"¹. This is that Kingdom which the GOD of Heaven was to set up, even as the other Kingdoms of which Daniel prophesied, upon earth ; a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed, a Kingdom which shall not be left to other people, as the other Kingdoms were, but which shall break in pieces and consume all other Kingdoms, and shall stand fast for ever, as a stone cut out of the mountain without hands².

And to what but to this faith of ancient Israel could the appeal be made by that voice in the wilderness which was heard saying, "Repent ye," and why? "*because* the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand"³. And how was this faith confirmed when the mightier voice of HIM whose shoe's latchet John was not worthy to unloose⁴ was heard repeating the exhortation, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand"⁵.

Observe, a kingdom was expected according to prophecy : it was declared that this Kingdom was not established, but at hand, that is, to be established soon. Soon, indeed ! for the KING had already appeared ; the MESSIAH was come ; HE was come of Whom the Angel Gabriel had declared to HIS Virgin Mother,

¹ Dan. vii. 13.² Dan. ii. 44, 45.³ Matt. iii. 2. John i. 23.⁴ Mark i. 7.⁵ Matt. iv. 17.

“ HE shall be great and shall be called the SON of the HIGHEST, and the LORD GOD shall give unto HIM the Throne of his Father David, and HE shall reign over the House of Jacob for ever, and of HIS Kingdom there shall be no end”¹; HE was come who was born King of the Jews; HE who bare witness of HIMSELF when HE witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate and said, *I am a KING*². But though the Jews, when they beheld HIS wondrous works and heard HIM speak as never man spake³, ought to have known that the Kingdom of Heaven was come unto them⁴; still, as we have seen, in strictness of speech, that Kingdom was not yet established, for that which is established is no longer at hand. And yet it was very nigh at hand, for we find our LORD telling HIS Apostles just before HIS Crucifixion, “ I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Kingdom of God”⁵. *Some*, not *all*, for among the persons addressed was Judas Iscariot, and Judas Iscariot had gone to “ his own place”⁶ before the resurrection of our LORD; and before his resurrection the Kingdom could not

¹ St. Luke, i. 32, 33.

² John, xviii. 37.

³ John, vii. 46.

⁴ Matt. xii. 28.

⁵ Luke, ix. 27. Matt. xvi. 28. Mark, ix. 1.

⁶ Acts, i. 25.

be established; for the establishment of HIS Kingdom is one of the results of the acceptance by the FATHER of the meritorious sacrifice of the Cross. This is quite evident from Scripture, which, speaking of our LORD, says of HIM, "Who being in the form of GOD thought it not robbery to be equal with GOD, but made HIMSELF of no reputation, and took upon HIM the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, HE humbled HIMSELF and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: *wherefore*," i. e. *on that account*, "GOD hath highly exalted HIM and given HIM a name which is above every name, that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in the Earth, and things under the Earth, and that every tongue should confess that JESUS CHRIST is LORD to the glory of GOD the FATHER"¹. And, again, we read, "for the joy that was set before HIM HE endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of GOD"². And, again, "for this end," saith St. Paul, "CHRIST, both died and rose and revived that HE might be LORD both of the dead and living"³.

¹ Phil. ii. 6, 11.² Heb. xii. 2.³ Romans, xiv. 9.

From all this it plainly appears that the *Kingdom* of the MESSIAH was to be the purchase of the *sufferings* of the MESSIAH. Before our LORD was crucified HIS Kingdom was not established; it was only at hand: but the price once paid, the Kingdom was HIS, and, as a KING, HE proceeded to perform regal acts. He rose from the dead, and immediately after proving the fact of HIS Resurrection, HE proceeded to assert HIS Sovereign authority. "All power," he proclaimed, "all power is given unto ME in Heaven and in Earth"¹. The power which was given was not the power which as the SECOND PERSON of the TRINITY HE possessed from everlasting, for that could neither be given nor taken away, but that regal power which pertained to HIM as MESSIAH, the KING, the GOD-Man, the SON of David, of whom GOD had said, "I will be HIS FATHER and HE shall be MY SON"².

And in what particular should we look for the first exercise of regal authority? Surely we should expect to find a new ruler giving his first attention to the appointment of ministers and officers under him, with a view to the permanent organization of his kingdom, and precisely so did our risen SAVIOUR act.

¹ Matt. xxviii. 18.

² 2 Sam. vii. 14.

He forthwith commissioned HIS Apostles, and in them, those whom they appointed as their successors, to be HIS Ministers on Earth when HE should be withdrawn as to HIS visible superintendence : and empowering them to administer Baptism as the rite of admitting subjects into HIS Kingdom, HE thus established HIS rule among men : thus planted the Kingdom of Heaven in the world¹.

And, acting on this commission, St. Peter, the spokesman of the blessed Company of the Apostles, in the very first sermon ever preached by a Christian Minister, proclaimed the glad tidings : " Let all the House of Israel know assuredly that GOD hath made that same JESUS whom ye have crucified both LORD and CHRIST"², *i. e.* the RULER and the KING. And he then by Baptism admitted men into the Kingdom, thereby becoming the Earthly Rock on which the Kingdom was erected³.

Having thus organized that portion of HIS Kingdom which is upon earth, the KING, as David foresaw and foretold, withdrew, for a time, from the world, sitting at GOD's right hand

¹ Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

² Acts, ii. 36.

³ Matt. xvi. 18.

until HIS enemies are made HIS footstool¹. But because HE is Invisible, is HE less our KING? Of the millions of her subjects how comparatively small is the number of those who have seen, or ever will see, the Sovereign of the British empire! She is visible only to a chosen few. Yet in her name her officers are acting in all parts of the world; by her, acting through her Ministers, all affairs in her dominions are ordered, directly or indirectly; to her is allegiance everywhere paid. Therefore, the invisibility of the KING of the Kingdom of GOD, to that portion of HIS empire which is yet in the flesh, is no proof that HE cannot reign over us; and if we have a KING, what is there that pertains to a Kingdom that this our Kingdom lacks?

There is no failure of subjects, for under the rule of our Heavenly SOVEREIGN countless thousands are daily born, even as many as being "born of water and of the SPIRIT"², enter the Kingdom of GOD, through the instrument of our KING's appointment. Our KING is said to possess the Key of David³, that is, the same regal Power over the subjects of his Empire which David

¹ Psalm, cx. 1.

² John, iii. 5.

³ Rev. iii. 7.

had over ancient Israel, a key being used by the Hebrews to denote authority and office, even as in European countries a wand or gold staff is adopted for the same purpose: and our Heavenly KING, as we have seen, has committed the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, in subordination, of course, to HIS own Sovereign Rule, to the Bishops of HIS Church, the Successors of the Apostles, who are thus empowered to act as the inferior Magistrates of HIS Kingdom¹. Is there a code of laws required? Behold them in the blessed Scriptures. Are precedents expedient to enable the Ministers of the Kingdom to interpret those Laws aright? Behold them in the received or traditionary Doctrines of the Church. High and holy are the privileges which the subjects of this Kingdom enjoy, for not only are they nourished, as the Israelites of old, by the spiritual food which is provided in the means of Grace, and especially in the Holy Eucharist, but for them is prepared a Mansion in the Heavens², if they avail themselves of the Grace vouchsafed them to discharge their peculiar duties, namely, faith, obedience, self-discipline, self-denial, charity, and zeal for the Glory of God.

¹ Cf. Hooker's Eccl. Pol., Book VI. Cap. iv. 1.

² John xiv. 2.

Nor are we to forget that, if invisible to us, still our KING is visible to some portions of HIS Kingdom, even to those who have departed this life in his faith and fear, and are now a portion of the Church Triumphant.

Thus, then, the Kingdom of Christ exists in HIS Holy Catholic Church, which has been most wonderfully preserved and miraculously handed down to us. When the Divine SOVEREIGN was on earth HE appeared but as a lowly Israelite who had not where to lay HIS head¹; and the first officers of HIS Kingdom were unlettered Fishermen of Galilee. And yet within an incredibly short space of time this Kingdom was found established, an *imperium in imperio*, within the very heart of the jealous empire of Rome. The Emperor had his officers, but in all the provinces they found other officers holding a concurrent jurisdiction; a spiritual jurisdiction, it is true, but not less real on that account, in an age when ecclesiastical censures and spiritual excommunications were more dreaded by a believing people than bonds or death: the subjects of this Kingdom were known to be under the direction of laws which they regarded as so far superior to those of the State, that if the laws of the State were incon-

¹ Matt. viii. 20.

sistent with the laws of this Spiritual Kingdom, there was no doubt but that the latter laws would, in preference to those of the former, be obeyed.

Thus completely did the Church exist an *imperium in imperio* ; and so in every nation is the Church still found to be a kingdom within a kingdom. But it seems to be an axiom with politicians that an *imperium in imperio* cannot be tolerated ; therefore it is that to mere worldly statesmen the very existence of the Church affords perplexity. Religion, in the abstract, they would almost idolize, as a grand ally ; but the Church is too real and independent an essence to gain their sympathy.

As the spiritual kingdom increases in numbers, and as its powers are more fully developed in any nation, it must become an object of jealousy to that country in which it exists. The State is, of course, bound to protect itself. One, then, of two things must in course of time follow : either the State must persecute the Church, that is to say, it must seek, in self-defence, to put down a power within itself not amenable to the laws of its own polity, and to punish or drive away citizens prepared, though never to rebel, yet to disobey laws inconsistent with the superior laws of the Spiritual Kingdom, while yielding without a murmur to the penalties of disobedience ;

or else, on the other hand, the State must ally itself with the Church, and, in greater or less degree, itself become blended with the Kingdom of GOD. At first the attempt was made to put down this rising power; and, on the acknowledged principles of worldly policy, persecution was resorted to. The subjects of the Kingdom of Heaven could not obey the laws of the Roman empire; for instance, they could not worship the Emperor; therefore, as disobedient citizens, they were condemned. But, contrary to all human expectation, persecution failed; and then ensued a severer trial. With this Kingdom of CHRIST, which, though *in* the world, is not *of* the world, the Roman Empire allied itself; and it became the policy of the State to recognize the acts of the Church, to assist in its propagation, and to acknowledge the Emperor, if the chief among men, to be the servant of the KING of Kings, one who, as such, was amenable to those ecclesiastical laws of which he was not the propounder, but the sworn protector. The State was subjected to the Kingdom of Heaven. Nor was the Kingdom bounded by even the wide frontier of the Roman Empire. Spreading from the Euphrates to the Ebro, the Rhine and the Danube, it was found established, men knew not how, among nations

the most barbarous ; amid the ranks of embattled armies and the warlike tribes of the North and the South. It conquered the very conquerors of Rome. They too subjected the State to the Church. The Kings of Tharsis and the Isles brought their presents ; the Kings of Arabia and Saba¹ brought their gifts : the East and the West vied in their homage, and the SON of DAVID was found to have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth² ; all Kings fell down before HIM, and all nations worshipped HIM ; the Heathen were HIS inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth HIS possession³.

But into the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, the spirit of corruption was gradually introduced ; and worldly policy, and worldly passions, were too often found to exist in the very sanctuary itself. Men began to rely not on the SPIRIT of the LORD, but on human might and human power⁴. The Bishop of Rome became a temporal Prince, and the followers of the Prince of Peace, in the times of the Crusades,

¹ 1 Kings x.

² Zech. ix. 10.

³ Psalm ii. 8. On the subject of this quiet yet systematic establishment of the spiritual Kingdom, the reader is referred to Eusebius's *Eccl. Hist.*, Book ii. Cap. 3, and to Book ix. of Bingham's *Antiquities of the Christian Church*.

⁴ Zech. iv. 6.

reversing the rule of the Gospel, beat their ploughshares into swords, and their pruning hooks into spears. Yes, corruptions were then introduced into the Kingdom of CHRIST, which still, throughout the greater part of it, exist to sadden the truly Christian heart.

To this fact we cannot be blind. When we look to the East, we see the oriental Churches, though true to the faith, still superstitious in practice: when we look to the West, we see the baneful influence of Popery extending itself over the Catholic Churches of Europe wherein the Pope is still permitted to assume that sovereign power which pertains to CHRIST alone; when we look to the purest portion of the Kingdom, to the Church of England and those Catholic Churches which are reformed on her model, while we find much for which to be thankful; while we humbly rejoice to see her, pure in faith, primitive in practice, and apostolical in descent, we have, nevertheless, to lament that not only her injunctions are disregarded, but her very principles repudiated by some even who minister at her altars¹; that a spirit of

¹ For instance, by those who (when asked by the penitent who only can desire it) refuse to use the absolution in the office of the Visitation of the Sick, and omit large portions of the baptismal offices, because those offices identify baptismal with

irreverence has so crept in among us, that by some men irreverence is regarded as a virtue; and that she has so succumbed to the state which—dreading the activity of the *imperium in imperio*—is ever jealous of her, that of the state, she is misrepresented by the wicked and regarded by the ignorant as the creature; though, from their anxiety to put her down, the very men, who thus misrepresent her, give proof that they fear the exercise of that power which they cannot but see exists, and may be exerted in the Kingdom of CHRIST; power fatal to a State unallied with the Church. The Church has never any thing to fear from the State, but the State much to fear from the Church, since a state opposed to the Church is opposed to the Church's KING, who is THE OMNIPOTENT.

But however corrupted in part the Kingdom of CHRIST may be, it still exists upon earth, a Kingdom of grace and heavenly influences; a Kingdom in every portion of which the subjects of it have in their possession those means of

spiritual regeneration; or who (if mindful of their solemn vow, they use the offices,) explain away or dishonestly evade the plain meaning of the words employed; who neglect fasting; who never keep saints' days; who despise week-day services; who slight penitence; who are afraid to speak of good works; who rarely celebrate the Holy Communion; who deny the truth of the Sacraments.

Grace by recourse to which each individual may, if it be not his own fault, become a partaker of the Atonement, once made for all men by HIM who is our PRIEST as well as our KING; those means of Grace in which, through the supernatural influence of GOD the HOLY GHOST, Adam's natural heart of stone may be converted into a heart of flesh¹, and so be prepared for the enjoyment of glory, when in glory as well as in purity the Kingdom shall be finally established.

But while we are compelled to admit and lament the errors which in the middle ages were permitted to creep into our heavenly Kingdom, while we mourn over the tares which the enemy hath sown², while we admit and lament that the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth is not what we might have expected, is not what it ought to be³, what hereafter it will be⁴; still, the scriptural Christian, while he is grieved by the fact, is by no means perplexed by it, for he has been warned that "so it must needs be." The great KING HIMSELF has compared HIS Kingdom to a net cast into the sea⁵, which gathers of every kind, and forewarns us that the good will not be separated from the bad until the

¹ Ezek. xi. 19.

² Matt. xiii. 25.

³ Eph. v. 27.

⁴ Rev. xxi.

⁵ Matt. xiii. 47.

end of the world, when our KING shall appear again on earth to exercise HIS office as JUDGE¹. It is compared to a field in which the tares and the wheat grow together²; to a feast, at which both the good and the bad are assembled³; to a company of virgins, where wise and foolish are mingled together⁴. By our heavenly KING HIMSELF we are forewarned that in HIS Kingdom many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many, and, (this is remarkably to our present purpose,) *because iniquity shall abound*—abound in the kingdom—“the love of many shall wax cold”⁵: by HIS Apostle it is predicted that there will be “false teachers who will bring in damnable heresies, denying the LORD that bought them, that many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil-spoken of”⁶. “The time will come,” says St. Paul, “when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts”; (not contented with the appointed officers of the Kingdom of Heaven,) “they shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth

¹ Acts, i. 11. ² Tim. iv. 1.

² Matt. xiii. 26, 30. ³ Matt. xxii. 9, 10. ⁴ Matt. xxv. 1, 4.

⁵ Matt. xxiv. 11, 12.

⁶ 2 Pet. ii. 1, 3.

and shall be turned unto fables"¹. It is expressly declared that "in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, inconstant, fierce, despisers of them that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness": (mark this, for it shews that it is of those who are subjects of the Kingdom of Heaven that the assertion is made :) "having a form of Godliness but denying the power thereof"². Our LORD has, indeed, predicted, through HIS Apostles, the occurrence of worse times than these ere the end shall come: even a very general apostasy from CHRIST of those who have hitherto professed allegiance to our Heavenly KING; a temporary triumph of Antichrist, and a consequent reduction of the Heavenly Kingdom. No unprejudiced person can study the prophetic books of Scripture without perceiving that there is to be a mighty conflict between the powers of light and darkness, between Antichrist and CHRIST, between the Destroyer and REDEEMER of mankind,

¹ 2 Tim. iv. 3—5.

² 2 Tim. iv. 1, 4.

between the Prince of this world and MESSIAH the KING, who is to come in Person, at the appointed time, with HIS vesture on, in all HIS glory, and with HIS Angels with HIM, conquering and to conquer¹.

In a word, the history of the Kingdom appears to be this : according to prophecy, it was miraculously spread over the world ; according to prophecy, it was partially, though not fundamentally, corrupted ; according to prophecy, it has been reduced, and will be reduced yet further ; but still a remnant will be left, and in the end it will be miraculously restored and finally established in Glory.

But my object, you will remember, is not to dwell on the past history or the future prospects of the Kingdom of GOD upon earth : my present object is to remind you that such a Kingdom does now exist *in* the world, though not *of* the world, and that the multitude of the baptized being subjects of this Kingdom are, like the Jews, living under a Theocracy. But if this be so, then the idea of rendering our homage to the KING of Kings ought to have place in that complicated act, public worship, not less among ourselves than among the Jews. We ought to enter the

¹ Matt. xxiv. 30. Rev. xix. 13.

Sanctuary, doubtless, to hear GOD'S Word read and expounded; doubtless, to seek Grace by prayer; doubtless, to seek union with CHRIST and so with GOD through the Sacraments, all which acts imply *faith* to receive the proffered grace, and *repentance* to prepare the heart for its reception¹: without doubt, all this is true; what I am now contending for is this, that we are *also* to attend as loyal subjects, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people"², bound to do homage before men³ and angels to our heavenly KING in HIS appointed Palace.

And this being so, we must feel as the Israelites did; we must feel as the inspired David did; and when and wherever a Palace is erected for our heavenly KING, we must desire it to be exceeding magnifical, and we must be prepared to bring our blue and our purple and our fine linen; we must be prepared with our talents of silver and talents of gold. Not only shall we be led to this by a sentiment to be cherished, a sentiment of Divine loyalty and love to CHRIST our KING; but we shall be led to do

¹ See Church Catechism; Acts, iii. 19; viii. 12, 36, 37.

Heb. xi. 22. 1 Cor. v. 78.

² 1 Pet. ii. 9.

³ Matt. x. 32. Luke, xii. 8.

so in order to keep up this idea in the minds of others. For wherever the decorations of the Sanctuary and its decent ceremonies are disregarded and neglected, we find that this element in Divine worship is lost, and irreverence ensues.

For an example of the truth of what I have now stated, we have not far to look. So entirely regardless had the people become during the last century of the decorations of the Sanctuary, so superstitiously opposed to the decent ceremonies of the Church, that to many persons this scriptural notion of serving our Heavenly KING, while we seek a blessing from our GOD, will appear like a novelty. But it was not, so with the early Christians. Their faith on this point is proved by the very name which they gave to the sanctuary, when they called it a Basilica, a Palace for the great KING¹. And this idea once admitted, their feelings were the same as those by which the ancient Israel was animated under similar circumstances; they desired that "the Palace, which was not for man but for the LORD GOD," should not fall short, in its magnificence, of the magnificence of that Palace in which their earthly sovereign dwelt: accordingly, we learn from St.

¹ Cf. Bingham, Orig. Eccles., Book 8, Chap. 2.

Jerome¹ that their churches were beautified by golden roofs, and walls adorned with crust of marble; the pillars with their chapiters were of shining gold; the gates inlaid with ivory and silver; their altars decorated with precious stones. And, taking for their guide the Israelites, to whom the will of God in this regard had been made known, the ceremonies which were used in the imperial residence out of respect to the Emperor, they adopted, in part, and sanctified to the use of the sanctuary, when serving the KING of Kings; the very vestments which have come down to the clergy of the Church Universal, which the Church of England for the most part retains in theory, though, through superstition, and in spite of the injunctions of the Church, they have been, in part, laid aside by our clergy; these vestments were robes of office worn by his subjects in the Court of the Emperor: the fashions of the Court changing, the custom of the Church remaining unaltered. The magnificent Cathedrals which adorn our land, still rear their majestic heads to attest that by this faith our ancestors in

¹ Hieron. Lib. 2 in Zechar. 8. Non solum laquearia et tecta fulgentia auro, sed Parietes diversi marmoris crustis vestiti. Id Ep 2 ad nepotian. Marmora nitent auro, splendent laquearia, Gemmis altare distinguitur. Id Ep 30 Epitaph Fabiolæ c. 4. Sonabant Psalmi, et aurata templorum tecta reboans in sublime quatiebat alleluya.

the Church of England were duly influenced; I hope they do not stand to proclaim that the members of our Church in the middle ages were more pious or more liberal than the members of our Church now; but most certainly they are there to shew, if that be not the case, that in regard to the subject under consideration their notions were more Scriptural than our own.

And this it is that gives to chanting its charm. They who have realized the idea which I have this day placed before you, desire, when doing their homage to their heavenly KING, to approach HIM with *peculiar* services; with prayers offered in a *peculiar* tone; a tone not used on any *other* occasion; a tone which, while they pray, reminds them that they are discharging no ordinary duty; that with the very angels, and, as it appears from Isaiah, in the very manner of angels, they are doing their homage¹.

But in the middle ages men gradually fell into the errors of an opposite extreme, and became liable to that censure in which, as we have seen,

¹ "By these," says St. Chrysostom, as quoted by Bingham, speaking of the holy pernoctations on the vigils of festivals, "you imitate the station of the angelical quire, whilst you offer up ἀκατάπαυστον ὑμνολογίαν—Psalmody and Hymnody, without ceasing to your CREATOR. O the wonderful gifts of CHRIST. The armies of Angels sing glory to GOD above; and on earth men keeping their choral station in the Church, sing the same Doxology after their example."—*Bingham, Orig. Eccl., Book xiii. chap. ix. sect. iv.*

the Jews were involved. Instead of regarding this as one out of the many complicated sentiments by which in public worship we should be influenced, they seem to have permitted this idea almost to supersede every other. The consequence was, in their case, as it must always be, Formalism. Just as men now become Formalists, and think themselves religious by adopting the peculiar phraseology of the religious world; just as they become Formalists, and think themselves religious by honouring the only ordinance of religion in the observance of which all the Protestant denominations in this country are agreed, that of the LORD's Day; just so did men become Formalists, and think themselves religious, in the middle ages, by attending at Church when the ceremonies of their religion were performed, even though their minds were far away; even though they entered the Palace of the Omniscient KING with a felon's intent or a traitor's heart. The mere fact of their attendance was deemed by them sufficient. They presented themselves before the LORD the KING; they acknowledged themselves to be HIS subjects; but they forgot that, *when* before HIM, their business was to learn HIS will from HIS word, to seek HIS Grace by prayer, and to be united with HIM in HIS Sacraments. The corrupt and unprimitive custom of the Roman Church, with which the Church of England was,

at that time, in close communion, in permitting non-communicants to be present at the celebration of the Eucharist (though the very name they have selected, in preference to all others, for that ordinance should have taught them otherwise¹)—this custom only tended to confirm this grievous error, and led men to think that from the services of the Church they might derive benefit, though their hearts were unprepared; that they could receive Grace, and be preserved in a state of justification, without faith, and without repentance!

Most needful, then, did it become, at the time of the Reformation, to remind the members of our Church that this idea, to which I have this day called your attention, is not the only one; no, nor the chief one; which should prevail when we are attending at public worship; it was needful and wise to admonish men, that to be present at prayer and yet not to pray, was a wicked superstition; it was needful and wise to warn them that they were to pray with the understanding as well

¹ "It is the name Mass, in Latin Missa, originally signifying nothing more than the dismissal of a Church assembly. By degrees it came to be used for an assembly, and for Church Service, so easily do words shift their sense and adopt new ideas. From signifying Church Service in general, it came at length to denote the Communion Service in particular, and so that most emphatically came to be called the Mass. St. Ambrose is reasonably supposed to be the earliest writer now extant who mentions Mass in that emphatical sense."—*Waterland on the Eucharist*, Vol. vii. p. 43.

as the spirit¹; it was needful and wise to take caution for their instruction in the laws of that Kingdom of which they were the subjects²; it was needful and wise to reduce the number of those ceremonies which, complained of by St. Augustine, had, by their gradual increase, become a burden too heavy to bear³, and had gained, in the estimation of the weak, an undue preponderance. It was on this principle that the Synods of the English Church, at the time of the Reformation, not only sanctioned the translation of the Missal and the Breviary into the vulgar tongue, but adopted that re-arrangement of the sacred offices which forms our Book of Common Prayer. Thus they enabled every Englishman, if in earnest, by the study of his Prayer Book, to pray with the understanding; thus they embodied in one book the traditionary practices of the Church by a regard to which we can best discover the right meaning of Scripture; and for this purpose, also, they restored the ordinance of preaching to its proper place, for it had been at that time greatly neglected. With respect to the Ceremonies of the Church, their principle, as afterwards expressed in the present Preface to

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

² See the Appointment of Daily Lessons.

³ Preface to Book of Common Prayer.

the Prayer Book, appears to have been admirable, even if, in a few instances, it was not precisely applied as some persons would have wished.

In the continental Catholic churches, which are now in the Roman obedience, and in which that Reformation has not taken place which is the great blessing of our own branch of the Catholic Church, the ceremonies remain much as they probably were in the Church of England before the Reformation; making due allowance for national customs, and the difference, in some respects, in the vestments of our clergy. In those ceremonies, too burdensome, as the Prayer-book expresses it, but not unmeaning, as the ignorant dogmatically assert, the student of medieval history can trace a striking similarity to the forms which were observed in the royal palace and the lordly castles. Now, this may have been very useful and very proper; it was only the application of the principle for which I have been contending, in an age of ceremonies, when every nobleman was served with a degree of state with which even monarchs now dispense; it was right that there should not be less of ceremony in the Palace of the KING of Kings than in the abode of the feudal chief. But these ceremonies become not only burdensome but unprofitable in an unceremonious age; and all

that we would ask is this, that there should be at least as much of ceremony in the sanctuary as in the royal palace; until ceremony is dispensed with there, we shall insist that ceremony shall be observed here. We think it hard that we should be superstitiously forbidden to bow to the Altar of the Church, styled by the ancients *Solium* CHRISTI, while to the empty chair of our earthly sovereign obeisance is still made in the House of Peers. We like not to yield the one until the other has been discontinued; we choose not to turn our back upon the Altar while it is still deemed disrespectful to turn our back upon the Throne. This principle seems to be an obvious deduction from the truths which I have propounded in this discourse. But if there be any who desire to see our Church recurring to the burdensome ceremonies of the middle ages, from which we have been exonerated by those who have power to loose as well as to bind, with such persons I, for one, can have no sympathy. For if, on the one hand, I would have the ceremonies of the Sanctuary carefully observed, to revive in the minds of our people the idea they have almost forgotten, that they come here as subjects doing homage to their Sovereign LORD, MESSIAH, their KING: I would guard, on the other hand, against such an attention to this particular as should lead to

the forgetfulness of the other objects for which public worship was appointed. And in acting on this principle, what more can we require than what the Church ordains in her Prayer Book and her Canons? In hymns which Saints have chanted, in supplications which Prophets have composed and Apostles used, in prayers which have solaced confessors in their trials, and Psalms which, inspired by the Holy Ghost, have animated Martyrs in their agony; in words which the LORD of Life himself hath taught us, we may approach the Throne of Glory and of Grace, and what more can we need? Only let due attention be paid to the directions by which these offices are to be performed, and you have a ceremonial sufficient, without doubt, for the exigencies of the present unceremonious generation.

It has been to enable us thus to serve GOD according to the ceremonial, not of the middle ages, but of the existing Church of England, that this our “beautiful House” has been erected, a Palace for the KING of Kings¹. We admit that there may be circumstances under which the lowly hovel may be a fit place for Christian

¹ This Sermon was preached on the day after the Consecration of the Parish Church of Leeds.

worship, as well as for the preaching of the Gospel; but then of the hovels that surround it, it ought to be the best. The Tabernacle was but a tent, but then among the tents of wandering Israel it stood pre-eminent and conspicuous. We would not have the Palace of our Heavenly KING inferior in magnificence to the Palace of our Earthly Sovereign. But then our ideas of magnificence are relative. Heaven alone is magnificent. When we shall be in Heaven, how insignificant will the most magnificent of Earthly things appear to be! What is requisite is only that we should offer at all times of our best. If the Sovereign of this land were led by circumstances to sojourn for a time in some poor village, the poor inhabitants of that village could not erect a sumptuous Palace for their Queen, nor would she expect it: but she *would* expect what loyal hearts would be proud to render, the very best accommodation the humble village could afford. And so in a retired hamlet, if we do feel shame to see a ruined Church beside a princely mansion, or, still more disgraceful—(oh! disgrace of the Church that ever it should so be!)—beside a decorated parsonage; yet we do not there expect a magnificent Sanctuary. We merely desire to see it neat and cleanly, and so arranged that in it the

services may be properly performed¹. But in a wealthy town, where our merchants, the Princes of the Earth, dwell in their ceiled houses, we *should* expect to behold a pious people lavishing their money in order to decorate the Palace of their GOD ; and they would feel shame to see HIS House alone unadorned by those arts in which HE has inspired our Bezaleels and Aholiabs to excel². So have felt the Churchmen of Leeds. Nobly, generously, piously have they come forward, the rich with their gold and the poor with their brass³, all desirous, before they erect, as I trust they will do, a multitude of humbler oratories, as aisles to this Church, in the poorer districts of the Parish : all desirous to see their Parish Church what the Palace of their Heavenly KING ought in this great and generous town to be.

But suffer the word of admonition ere we separate. This Palace has been erected that our heavenly KING may be served according to the rites and ceremonies appointed by the English branch of the Catholic Church. To enter into the meaning of those services you must imbibe the spirit in which the various portions of the

¹ Cf. Hooker, Eccles. Polity, b. vii. cap. xxii. 3.

² Exod. xxxi. 2. 6 ; xxxv. 30, 34 ; xxxvi. 1.

³ Exod. xxxv. 5 ; xxxvi. 5.

Prayer Book were first composed, and, after their corruption, reformed. Unless you believe in the GOD of Christians, the holy and undivided TRINITY, you worship not the GOD whom in the Liturgy we adore, and if you apply its language to some imaginary deity, whom you opine to exist in one person only, what do you other than bow the knee to Rimmon in the Palace of JEHOVAH?¹ Unless you come into the DIVINE PRESENCE with an awful sense of the deep, the desperate corruption of your nature, and of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the words of our confessions will seem to you more like exaggeration than truth; unless you believe in all the mercies of Redeeming love, and have realized them by a justifying faith to your soul, in the Incarnation of the everlasting SON of GOD and in the stupendous sacrifice of the Cross, the thanksgivings in our Prayer Book will be to you but an unintelligible jargon: unless, while eschewing the meritorious dignity, you acknowledge the dutiful necessity of doing well, our exhortations will be tedious as a twice-told tale; unless you believe that the Sacraments are not mere empty signs, but that they are the means to convey to faithful and penitent hearts

¹ 2 Kings, v. 18.

the Grace of the Atonement, our Sacramental services will seem to you void of sense: unless you believe that, in attending the Sanctuary, you are standing in God's Palace, and doing homage to your KING, you will unite with those who mock at our ceremonies and malign our ordinances: but if, believing these Gospel Truths and endeavouring to practise these Evangelical virtues, you would avoid the extremes of fanaticism on the one hand and those of lukewarmness on the other; the superstitions of popery and the irreverence of ultra-protestantism; if you seek to tread that middle path which the Scriptures indicate and the Fathers trod, then will you be prepared to worship here with the spirit as well as with the understanding; and so may we continue, dear brethren, as heretofore, to "walk as friends"¹ in this "our holy and our beautiful House"², a "Palace, not for man, but for the LORD GOD."

¹ Psalm lv. 14, 15 Prayer Book version.

² Isaiah lxiv. 11. Psalm xlviii. 2.

SERMON VI.

THE DOCTRINE OF HOLY PLACES.

GENESIS, XXVIII. 16, 17.

“ And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, how dreadful is this place ; this is none other but the House of God, and this the Gate of Heaven.”

SUCH was the inference of the Patriarch Jacob from certain circumstances which occurred to him as he “ went out from Beersheba and went towards Haran. And he lighted on a certain place and tarried there all night because the sun was set”¹. It seemed to be by chance that he fixed upon the spot. The place was called Luz, from the many almond trees that grew there²; and

¹ Gen. xxviii. 10.

² Gen. xxviii. 19.

because the almond trees seemed to afford a convenient shelter he may have chosen here, after a long day's journey, to lie down for repose. But it often happens that what man regards as chance is, in truth, a special Providence. So was it in this instance. The certain place on which the wearied Jacob lighted, was the very spot on which, one hundred and sixty years before, his grandfather Abraham had "built an altar unto the LORD and called upon the name of the LORD"¹. It was holy ground! It is said that "Jacob took of the stones of that place and put them for his pillow, and lay down in that place to sleep." And why should this circumstance of "his taking of the stones of that place" be mentioned, if it be not to suggest to us that the stones he used were the stones of Abraham's ruined altar? But, at all events, reclining on that hard pillow, he dreamed, and "behold a ladder set on the Earth and the top of it reached to Heaven, and behold the Angels of God ascending and descending on it, and behold the LORD stood above it"².

It is not my present purpose to consider the full meaning of this heavenly vision; my object is to call your attention to the words of our text

¹ Gen. xii. 8.

² Gen. xxviii. 12, 13.

which contain Jacob's inference from the fact which in the night visions he had witnessed: "Surely the LORD is in this place and I knew it not. How dreadful is this place; this is none other than the House of GOD and this the Gate of Heaven."

Now, here observe, in the first instance, that the Patriarch Jacob believed that GOD could be and was in one place more particularly and especially than in another. "The LORD is in *this* place"; therefore, it is "a dreadful" or awful place. "How dreadful is this place; this is none other but the House of GOD." To GOD the place was dedicated by Abraham, and in that place, therefore, GOD was specially Present, though Jacob knew it not until it was revealed to him.

So, then, Jacob believed that very truth, for believing which those among us who regard any place which may have been consecrated to GOD with other feelings than we regard an unconsecrated place are held exceedingly in derision; and this, too, by some who "think themselves wise"¹. Referring to the admitted fact that GOD the CREATOR and PRESERVER of all things must be everywhere Present, they who deride us, too hastily infer that HE cannot be present more in

¹ Gen. xxviii. 17.

one place than HE is in another¹. Yet if we look to the sun, is not the sun, being the source of light to this nether sphere, present in every place wherein is solar light? But, nevertheless, the sun is present in a very different manner in the deep recesses of the forest and in the open plain; in the wide street and in this Sanctuary where its rays are tintured by the storied window; and, if this be so, why, then, should we deem it to be an impossible thing that thus it should also be with respect to that all-glorious BEING who is the CREATOR of the sun? Is it because we have no sense by which to discern HIS Presence in one place rather than in another? If that be the case, then these walkers by sight and not by faith², in order to be consistent, ought to conclude that GOD is not present anywhere; for where on Earth do we see HIM?

But perhaps a mistake of our meaning arises in men's minds by their not observing that when, in the language of Scripture, we speak of GOD dwelling in sacred places, we do not say, or

¹ By some Christians this argument has been used as if it were peculiarly Christian; but it is the argument of the Infidel and the Heathen.

Estne Dei sedes, nisi terra, et pontus, et aer,
Et cœlum, et virtus? Superos quid quærimus ultra?
Jupiter est quodcumque vides, quocumque moveris.

Lucan, Lib. ix. 578-80.

² 2 Cor. v. 7.

intend to say, that HE is *confined* to temples made with hands¹. What we mean to say is, that in consecrated places, HE is present in a special, a peculiar, a mysterious manner; in a mode different from that in which HE is present in other places which HE has not made Holy. In HIS Essence GOD is indeed present every where². In that sense HE fills not only Heaven and Earth, but the Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens; yea, the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain HIM. Whither shall we go from HIS SPIRIT, or whither shall we go from HIS presence? If we climb up into Heaven HE is there; if we go down into Hell HE is there also; if we take the wings of the morning and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall HIS hand lead us, and HIS right hand shall hold us; if we say, peradventure, the darkness shall cover us, then shall our night be turned into day; yea, the darkness is no darkness with HIM, but the night is as clear as the day, the darkness and the light to HIM are both alike³.

Now, no words can express more sublimely the fact of the Divine Omnipresence; and yet you cannot fail to perceive how this very passage

¹ Mark xiv. 58.

² Heb. v. 13.

³ Psalm. cxxxix. 7—12.

substantiates the truth I would now enforce : GOD is present everywhere, but surely HE is present in Heaven in a manner very different from that in which HE is present in Hell. But if so, why may HE not be present in one place on earth in a manner very different from that in which HE is present in another place on earth ?

That HE is thus differently present in different places is abundantly evident from Scripture¹. Our Text you have heard. But our Text is not the first passage in Holy Scripture in which this doctrine is implied. We read that the guilty Cain went out from the Presence of the LORD². But it cannot be meant that we should suppose from this that there is any place on earth where GOD in HIS Essence is not ; but what is meant must be that there was a place where GOD was known to be peculiarly present ; that East end, perhaps, of the Garden where the Cherubim and a flaming sword turned every way, and prevented the re-entrance of the fallen race into Paradise³, where, before this sensible symbol of the Divine Presence, our first parents may have been accustomed to worship. But be this as it may, the doctrine that GOD may be more in one place than in another is fully and unequivocally implied in this passage.

¹ Psalm cxxxix. 11, 12.

² Gen. iv. 16.

³ Gen. iii. 24.

That a place can be holy is evident from the command to Moses that he should put off his shoes from off his feet, because the ground on which he was standing was holy¹; and why holy? Even because there The ANGEL JEHOVAH, God the MESSENGER, the second Person of the HOLY TRINITY, was present². And when the same Blessed Person in the GODHEAD appeared, as the Captain of the LORD'S Host, to Joshua the son of Nun, the same direction was given and the same cause assigned³. Again, it was not merely to provide men with a Place for sacrifice and worship, that the Israelites were commanded to build a Sanctuary; it was that GOD might dwell among them⁴. In all Places HE said when I record MY name, I will come unto thee and bless thee⁵: all which refers to an especial, a peculiar Presence, of the possibility of which the people received ocular demonstration when the Law was given from the Holy Hill of Sinai; and when the Shechinah alighted on the Tabernacle and the Temple⁶. Indeed, at the consecration of the Temple, as if to shew that something more was then done than the mere dedication of a place for sacred uses,

¹ Exod. iii. 5.² Exod. iii.³ Josh. v. 15.⁴ Exod. xxv. 8.⁵ Exod. xx. 24.⁶ Exod. xl. 34; 1 Kings, viii. 11; 2 Chron. v. 14; vii. 1, 2, 3.

JEHOVAH expressly declared, "I"—not man—but "I"—the LORD Himself—"have hallowed this house"¹. And how had he hallowed it? "Behold, it came to pass, when the Priests were come out of the holy place, that the Priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, FOR THE GLORY OF THE LORD HAD FILLED THE HOUSE OF THE LORD"².

In a word, to David and Solomon, and all the Prophets, the Doctrine of the Divine Omnipresence was known; yet they did not suppose this doctrine inconsistent with the belief that Jerusalem was the City of the LORD³, the Zion of the HOLY ONE of Israel⁴.

So was it under the law, and why should it be different under the Gospel? That GOD may be, and is, present in one place more than in another, is implied in our LORD's promise, that where two or three are gathered together in His name, to offer the petitions they have previously agreed to ask, there HE is in the midst of them⁵. Now, CHRIST is very and eternal GOD, and consequently HE is, as GOD, present everywhere; and yet HE has promised to be in an especial manner

¹ 1 Kings, ix. 3.

² Ex. xl. 34. 1 Kings, viii. 11. ³ 1 Kings viii. 29, 30.

⁴ Is. lx. 14.

⁵ Matt. xviii. 20.

present in the “Assembly of the Saints”¹. But if HE is present where two or three are gathered together, even at the domestic altar, may we not feel much more certain that HE will be there where a whole parish assembles under its Divinely appointed Pastor to offer up the grateful incense of the morning and evening sacrifice, or to receive those Sacraments which are only efficacious through the real Presence of CHRIST our SAVIOUR²: so also the HOLY GHOST, being GOD, is Present everywhere; but surely HE is Present in a different manner in the heaven of a saint’s soul and the hell of an apostate’s heart!

Now, here the question occurs, if there be a difference of the mode in which GOD is present in one place rather than in another, in what does this distinction consist? To answer this question in all its fulness is impossible. But we may so far venture to meet it as to conjecture that it consists in part, at least, in this, that in holy places HE is attended by an especial multitude of ministering, though invisible, angels. When the invisible world was, for a moment, made visible to Jacob, he saw himself in the midst of angels; angels were seen ascending and descending from Heaven³. Where GOD is present in HIS glory,

¹ Ps. lxxxix. 7.² John xv. 4.³ Gen. xxviii.

there, like the retinue attendant on a king, His blessed angels take their station. This was obviously the faith of Jacob when he exclaimed, "This is the gate of Heaven." In those days kings were wont to hold their courts sitting in the gate of the city. When, therefore, Jacob said "This is the gate of Heaven," he meant to say that the spot he so designated was the Palace of GOD. He saw here the retinue of the LORD, and he therefore regarded the place as the Court or Palace of the KING of Saints¹. We almost always find that whenever the Glory of GOD is spoken of in Scripture there is a reference to this fact. Daniel, on approaching the Throne of the Ancient of Days, beheld thousands of angels ministering unto HIM, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before HIM². To the same purpose the Psalmist tells us, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels"³. And among them, he informs us, "The LORD was in His holy place of Sinai"; yes, when the LORD came down from Sinai, and rose up from Seir, and shined forth from Mount Paran, HE came attended by myriads of His Saints⁴, and these, we learn from St. Stephen and

¹ Gen. xxviii. 17.

² Dan. vii. 10. ³ Ps. lxxviii. 17. ⁴ Deut. xxxiii. 2 ;
Acts, vii. 53 ; Gal. iii. 19.

St. Paul, were angels, ministering sprits, sent forth to minister to them that are heirs of Salvation. It was attended by such a train filling the Temple, and crying one to another, "Holy, Holy, Holy," that Isaiah beheld the LORD sitting upon His Throne¹. The Israelites knew that the Angel of the LORD encampeth about them that fear HIM²; they knew that angels had charge over the people of GOD³; that it was an Angel who stood by Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, in the burning fiery furnace at Babylon⁴; that it was an angel who was beside Daniel in the den of Lions⁵; and they reasoned *a fortiori* that these angels must also be where not merely one but the multitude of believers assemble to present themselves before the LORD; and that in the Gate of Heaven, the Palace of JEHOVAH, those celestial spirits do their homage to their Heavenly KING. Cordially, therefore, could they respond to David when he exclaimed, "I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; before the *gods*," (that is, according to the Septuagint,) "before the *Angels* will I sing praise unto thee." So deeply impressed were they with the notion that *there*, where the KING of Kings was especially Present, His

¹ Is. vi. 3.² Ps. xxxiv. 7.³ Ps. xci. 11.⁴ Dan. iii.⁵ Dan. vi.

retinue, His Angels, would be present also, that they were prepared to believe Josephus when he recorded the fact that, as the Temple was about to be destroyed, angelic voices were heard to say, "Let us depart hence."¹

Now, such being the belief of the Jews, such the Revelation of GOD, if the fact were changed under the new dispensation of the Gospel, we should, of course, expect to find an express intimation of that change in the Apostolic writings. Without such intimation we should conclude that wherever GOD is specially Present, that *where*, for instance, HE is present as the Everlasting KING in HIS Sanctuary, *there* the Angels are also specially present. Now so far from discovering any intimation of such a change in the writings of the New Testament, we find, on the contrary, intimations that the fact remains the same. When St. Paul alluded to the sufferings which the Apostles were appointed to endure, he spake of them as being a spectacle not only to men but also to angels²: when delivering his charge to the Bishop of Ephesus, he reminded him of the elect Angels who, with GOD and the

¹ Josephus—Jewish Wars, vi. 5.

² 1 Cor. iv. 9.

LORD JESUS CHRIST, had been witnesses of his Consecration¹. If the early Christians still frequented the Temple, because it continued to be the Palace of their heavenly MASTER, they must have regarded it, as we have just remarked, as the abode of Angels; but they were not persons likely to suppose that the memorials of the Gospel, deep and tremendous Mysteries, would be destitute of that spiritual attendance with which even the rudiments of the law were honored; *they* were not the persons to imagine that the angels who waited upon the types would withdraw from the Substance. No, truly; for they knew that into all that pertains to man's Redemption, into all that belongs to the application of the Atoning Blood and Sanctifying SPIRIT of the Everlasting SON of GOD unto man's ruined soul, all the Angels desire to look²; as St. Peter says, they *stoop down* to look, so earnestly do they contemplate it. And for this, among other reasons, does St. Paul direct the women to conduct themselves with decorum in the Sanctuary, viz., "because of the Angels"³: a passage which has been perplexing to modern

¹ 1 Tim. v. 21.

² 1 Peter, i. 12.

³ 1 Cor. xi. 10.

commentators¹ who are determined not to adhere to the literal and first meaning of the words, but which presented no perplexity to the Ancients, who received the Scriptures in their simplicity and their fulness, inasmuch as they were strong in the faith that in places consecrated to God

¹ It is curious to observe the subterfuges to which some commentators have recourse, rather than accept the plain meaning of Scripture. Some suppose that the Apostle enjoins women to conduct themselves with due decorum in Church, because of the seduction of the first woman by evil Angels, an explanation which has the demerit of making the Apostle utter words without meaning. Others, therefore, would understand by Angels, the Bishops, who are so styled in the Apocalypse; but, besides that this does not accord with the context, it would appear strange that such a meaning should have escaped the Ancients, whose reverence for the Apostolic order of Bishops was far greater than our's is generally found to be; nor are Bishops at all times present at Church, and this is clearly intended for a general rule. If it be said that the expression may apply to any officiating *Minister*, it remains to be shewn whether the word Angel has ever been applied to denote each order in the Ministry, or any except the Episcopal; and until this be done, it will be safest not to render Scripture of "none effect" by the follies of human speculation. Others there are who would represent the Apostle as alluding to the spies sent into Churches by the Heathens to detect and expose any irregularities on the part of the Christians. One author, *Le Clerc*, with the bold presumption belonging to his Arminian party, would contest the genuineness of the Text and proceed to an alteration; in short, any thing—any absurdity—any violence to the Text, would be tolerated by these critics rather than understand the Apostle literally. They are actually afraid of the Bible, because, by understanding it as every plain man must understand it, they would expose themselves to the ridicule of those who think themselves wise, although they are in fact the reverse.

those heavenly spirits are peculiarly present who are sent forth to minister to all such as be heirs of Salvation ; they regarded the Church as it was regarded by St. Chrysostom as the Place of Angels, the Place of Archangels, the Palace of God¹.

And why should we hesitate to believe a fact so clearly intimated in the Scriptures of Truth ? Is the same objection started here as we have seen to be started before ? Do men hesitate to believe this fact because it is not palpable to the senses ? Suppose that the sun were never to withdraw his shining from us in our portion of the globe, and that it was declared to us by persons who had been differently situated from ourselves, that in the blue serene above us, certain smaller orbs of light are in existence, would the fact so declared be a fact, under the circumstances, more marvellous than that which is declared when we are told that there is around us an innumerable company of spiritual existences, whose presence we have no sense to discern ? or, at all events, would it be a wise man's answer to say, I cannot see those shining lights and *therefore* they are not : I do not perceive the use of them, the sun giving light sufficient, and *therefore* I will not believe you ?

¹ Heb. i. 14.

The unseen world has indeed been occasionally revealed. It was revealed in holy vision to Isaiah¹ and Ezekiel² as well as to Jacob : but still more directly to Elisha and his servant³. When Elisha was at Dothan, surrounded by the Syrian army, his servant was in despair : “ Alas ! he cried, Master, what shall we do ? ” And the Prophet prayed to the LORD, and his servant’s eyes were opened, and he beheld the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about, so that he exclaimed, ‘ There be more with us, than there be with them ’.⁴ And why was this miracle narrated by the recording SPIRIT ? Why, except for our instruction in righteousness ?⁵ Why, but to strengthen our faith⁶, and to enable us to live “ as seeing HIM who is invisible ” ?⁷

We live in an age of scientific pursuit, and we believe the professor of science when he tells of marvels greater than these. In this bright pellucid air which we inhale with our nostrils, this transparent atmospheric ocean that floats around us, we see nothing, we feel nothing ; and yet in this air, this element apparently so simple, a kind of nothing to all appearance, the man of science recognises a sort of laboratory in which incessant

¹ Isaiah, vi.² Ez. viii. 9, 10.³ 2 Kings, ii. 11, 15.⁴ 2 Kings, vi. 15, 16.⁵ 2 Tim. iii. 16.⁶ Col. ii. 2.⁷ Heb. xi. 27.

actions are going on ; a sort of chemical vessel in which every species of body is continually floating ; from whence proceed sublimations, separations, digestions, putrifications, and a vast variety of other processes. And when we are told these things shall we easily give them credit, thereby placing implicit faith in man, and shall we yet withhold our faith from GOD, and from HIM alone ? Shall we believe man when he tells us of these wonders, and not believe GOD when HE condescends to inform us that *among* these things invisible and indiscernible, and which the philosophers tell us must be in existence, the Angels the Sanctities of Heaven, celestial Spirits, take their place to minister to the Heirs of Salvation ? No ; in the words of the illustrious Bishop Bull, “for my own part, being conscious to myself of my own infirmity, and believing that what I discourse at this time of the ministry of the Holy Angels, I deliver in the presence of some of those heavenly ministers, I shall be careful to keep myself within the bounds of modesty and sobriety”¹. No ; for in the words of Bishop Taylor, “Churches and oratories are regions and courts of Angels, and they are there not only to minister to the Saints, but also they possess them in the right of God”².

¹ Works, Edit. Oxon. ii. p. 325.

² Works, Edit. Heber. ii. 352.

Now, to those who thus believe as the Scriptures teach, how awfully solemn was the rite of Consecration by which this Sanctuary was lately dedicated to God¹. Let us see how that act was contemplated by them. In the erection of this sacred edifice, out of the good things which God hath given to man, man has returned a portion to be devoted to the peculiar and exclusive service of the everlasting Donor. Man has virtually said, in the language adopted in the ancient Liturgies when the oblation and alms were placed upon the altar, "Of THINE own gifts have we laid THINE own before THEE, O LORD, our GOD. We offer THEE THINE own out of THINE own, it is THY right and gift; accept, then, O LORD, this gift for THINE own, according to THY great goodness." And the chief Minister of God, in this portion of His Kingdom, has attended, in the name of God, to receive this gift at our hands, and, by God's appointment, to leave His blessing upon this House. The chief Pastor of the Diocese has, in God's name, saluted this House; he has said, "Peace be to this House,"² and on the House the Peace of God now rests. But when the human Minister, the Ambassador

¹ This Sermon was preached soon after the Consecration of the Parish Church of Leeds.

² Luke x. 5.

for CHRIST, came to receive this gift, did he come alone? Was he alone in taking possession? Not so, indeed, if there be truth in what has now been stated. Surely, this House has been filled with the Glory of GOD, even as the Tabernacle visibly was when it was consecrated by Moses¹, even as the Temple when dedicated by Solomon². Yes, verily, they who receive the great Scriptural truth, the sanctity of holy places, they, as they saw with the bodily eye the gates of this Church opened to the earthly Ambassador of GOD, beheld, with the eye of faith, the everlasting doors uplifted, and saw the KING of Glory come in. And “Who is the KING of Glory? Even the LORD of Hosts, HE is the KING of Glory”; the LORD whose Glory, in part, consists in the hosts of sinless intelligences by whom HE is surrounded. The consecration, then, of this Edifice, which will live long in our memories, was not, as the carnal-minded, who came to mock at our solemnities, (if such, peradventure, there were,) would suppose, the pompous opening of a school for the education of the people, of a splendid hall for the teaching of morality, or for the inculcation of mere popular doctrine. No; here GOD hath recorded HIS

¹ Exod. xl. 34—38.² Ezra, iv.

name¹; this is now the Hill of the LORD², an Habitation for the mighty GOD of Jacob³, a Zion where GOD will henceforth appear to the faithful in perfect beauty⁴; this is none other than the House of GOD, and this the Gate or Palace of Heaven upon earth; here we are surrounded by horsemen and chariots of fire invisible except to the eye of Faith; here has been planted the ladder for ascending and descending Angels; an innumerable company, eager to witness the Glory of GOD as manifested in the mysteries relating to man's Salvation, which will here come to pass. Here Angels will see, and, while they see, adore, the deep Mystery of the Atonement, in its application to the sinner's soul. Here, to their adoring wonderment, they will see the Third PERSON in the ONE GODHEAD, attendant upon the ordinances of the Gospel, the Divine MINISTER in the Kingdom of CHRIST, to create anew the evil heart of fallen man, while children, yet unborn, shall be brought here to receive "that thing which by nature they cannot have, a death unto sin and a new-birth unto righteousness," in the laver of Regeneration⁵. Here, descending Angels will attend while the

¹ Exod. xx. 24. ² Ps. xxiv. 3. ³ Ps. cxxxii. 5. ⁴ Ps. l. 2.

⁵ Church Catechism.

Church's sacrifice of prayer and praise will be offered, which, accepted through the merits of a crucified SAVIOUR, will go up as much incense, to be presented by ascending angels upon the golden altar which stands before the heavenly Throne of our Everlasting KING. Here they will rejoice to hear the Gospel preached, the message of mercy, the glad tidings of Salvation¹, to a desperately wicked world: Here, too, Angels and Archangels, and all the Company of Heaven, will come, to laud and magnify the name of the LORD GOD of Hosts², while to faithful hearts, under the symbols of the bread that we break and the cup that we bless³, CHRIST conveys HIMSELF⁴; here Angels will see in holy matrimony, a Divine ordinance signifying the mystical union that is betwixt CHRIST and HIS Church; nor will the Angels, who contended with the Devil disputing about the body of Moses⁵, refuse their attendance, when in the course of time the dead bodies of those who shall die in the LORD shall, within these consecrated precincts, be consigned "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust"⁶. They will regard

¹ Luke, ii. 10.² Communion Office.³ 1 Cor. x. 16.⁴ John, vi.⁵ Jude, 9.⁶ Burial Service.—*Book of Common Prayer*.

with affection what was once a Temple of the Holy Ghost¹—the dust which will hereafter be re-animated to sing with the Angels, for ever and for ever, the praises of the God of Angels as well as of men.

I would ask you, my brethren, to act like the good Bereans, to search the Scriptures, and to see if these things be not so². If on these things Protestant tradition is silent, and if, therefore, they have not hitherto been brought prominently before you, remember that Scripture is above all tradition, above all systems of theology. Neither Protestant tradition nor Catholic tradition is of value except so far as it accords with Scripture. And if the traditionary religion, or, as they are sometimes called, the received doctrines of our age, be in any way defective, by Scripture must the deficiency be supplied. To the law and to the testimony must we appeal³.

But if these things be so, “what manner of men ought we to be”⁴ in the House of our God? How ought we to comport ourselves not only because of the Angels, but because of the LORD GOD. GOD is our MASTER : we are HIS servants :

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 19.

² Acts xvii. 11.

³ Isaiah viii. 20.

⁴ 2 Pet. iii. 11.

this is **HIS** House. And will the good servant of an earthly master, when called upon to wait, address his master in the terms of familiarity with which he addresses his equals? Will he seat himself upon the easy couch, and just so far wait upon his master as he finds it to be convenient? Will his demeanour be that in which he engages in his ordinary work when not in his master's immediate presence? Will he indulge in laughter with his fellow servants, and make irreverent remarks on what he sees and hears around him? Servants of the Lord of the whole earth¹; ye who are seeking to make yourselves easy and comfortable when ye come here to wait upon your **MASTER**; ye who who indulge in idle remarks and conversation; ye who give no heed to what is doing or to be done, do ye comport yourselves in the House of your **MASTER**, as dutiful servants would be expected to do?

GOD is our **KING**: we are **HIS** subjects. When we stand in the presence of our earthly sovereign, how much of reverence is shewn, how much of ceremony observed; ceremony being the outward demonstration of reverence. And how readily is that ceremony observed! how reluctantly would

¹ Isaiah liv. 5. Mic. iv. 13. Zech. iv. 14.

it be dispensed with ! and this because we are impressed with a sense of reverence in the august presence of the sovereign. This impression the republican philosopher, with the most cold and un-enthusiastic heart, could not fail, in a degree, to experience. And what we feel, it is pleasant to express, not in some extemporaneous act which might expose us to ridicule, but by some customary form : ceremony in such a case becomes a relief to us, by pointing out a mode in which the feelings of the heart may be indicated in a manner by which we shall not be invidiously distinguished from others. And so will the ceremonies of the Palace of the KING of Kings be a relief to those who, being aware that any personal distinction, any thing which calls the attention to ourselves, as if we were different from others, is to be deprecated in religion, still desire to express their overwhelming feelings of reverence. And if those feelings be *not* experienced, what reason can there be but this, that we forget, because HE is not visible, that the Great GOD of Heaven and Earth is really Present among us ? Let, then, the saying of Jacob be impressed upon our minds. As we enter the LORD's house, let us kneel down and collect our thoughts, and say : *How dreadful is this place,*

this is none other than the House of God, and this the gate of Heaven: and as the service proceeds, and our thoughts incline to wander, let us recal them by repeating again and yet again, *This is none other than the House of God, and this is the GATE OF HEAVEN.*

SERMON VII.

PUBLIC WORSHIP A SACRIFICE.

HOSEA, XIV. 2.

“So will we render the Calves of our Lips.”

THERE is but One PRIEST¹ who, in HIS own right, can approach GOD²; there is but One MEDIATOR who can plead HIS own goodness³, even the LORD JESUS CHRIST; and so, there is but ONE propitiatory, expiatory SACRIFICE⁴; even “the one full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction,” once made upon the Cross, when the LAMB of GOD was offered for the

¹ Heb. iv. 14.

² Heb. vii. 26.

³ 1 Tim. ii. 5. Heb. ix. 14.

⁴ Heb. ix. 28.

sins of the whole world¹. There never has been, there never will be, any other. Except for this one and only ATONEMENT, nothing we could say, think, or do, would be acceptable to GOD²; but for this, we should all remain as we were born, an accursed race³.

But though this be most true, yet with respect to those who rely on the intercession of that one great PRIEST, and, by an ever-present faith, plead and apply to their souls the Merits of that ONE expiatory Sacrifice, the SPIRIT teacheth us that they render unto GOD acceptable service⁴. GOD, for CHRIST's sake, will accept a service at their hands; in other words, he will permit them to stand in a favourable relation to HIM, whom, except for CHRIST, they could not approach⁵. And this gives us the Idea of a Sacrifice. For a Sacrifice is something presented to GOD, in behalf of Man, by persons Divinely appointed to "offer Gifts unto the LORD"⁶.

In this sense, the "blood of bulls and of goats"⁷ under the Law became a typical sacrifice; and under the Gospel the Eucharist is thus designated, being a Commemorative Sacrifice⁸. But that of which I would now seek to remind

¹ 1 John ii. 2.

² John xv. 5. ³ Eph. ii. 3. ⁴ Romans, xii. 1 ⁵ Eph. ii. 1.

⁶ Exod. xxviii, 38. ⁷ Heb. ix. 13. ⁸ 1 Cor. xi. 26.

you is, that, as a Sacrifice, according to Scripture, public worship is also to be regarded, and it is very essential to represent it as such. It may, at first sight, appear to be unimportant to insist upon the use of a particular term. And yet how often it happens that by neglecting to use a particular term you gradually lose the Doctrine which that term embodies and is thus instrumental in preserving. It is to be feared that such has, to a great extent, been the case with respect to Public Worship.

That public worship is to be regarded as a Sacrifice, is evident from the most unquestionable authority of Holy Scripture. This doctrine is directly implied in that passage which, as being one that, once suggested to the mind, is not easily forgotten, I have selected for my Text. To our ears, the figure of speech here employed, sounds somewhat singular, but it would seem sufficiently natural to the Jews, accustomed as they were to bloody Sacrifices¹. As Calves were offered in sacrifice, so are the Lips of worshippers to be as Calves; they are to be a Sacrifice to GOD, or, in other words, the worshippers of GOD are to offer what is elsewhere styled the Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving². St. Paul may be admitted as the

¹ Lev. xvii. 11.

² Jerem. xxxiii. 11. Amos, iv. 5.

interpreter of the Prophet in that passage in which he says, "By Him," that is, by CHRIST, "let us offer the Sacrifice of Praise to GOD continually, that is, the fruit of our Lips, giving thanks to HIS name"¹. And in like manner, St. Peter, speaking of the Christian Church: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up, a spiritual House, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to GOD by JESUS CHRIST"². The Apostle cannot here refer to the Eucharist, because he was addressing Christians generally as the holy Priesthood; and, as I shall have occasion presently to remark, the celebration of the Eucharist requires the intervention of a special order of men separated from among the general body of believers: he must therefore refer to the Service of Public or Common Prayer, which he describes as a spiritual Sacrifice. And St. Paul, in giving his directions to the Bishop of Ephesus for the regulation of his Church, exhorts, "that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men"³: in which passage the original word, which is translated "made," is used also to signify "offered in Sacrifice"; and the Service is to be so offered as to benefit all men, especially those who are more particularly

¹ Heb. xiii. 15.² 1 Peter, ii. 5.³ 1 Tim. ii. 1.

designated. "Let my Prayer be set forth as the incense," says David, "and the lifting up of my Hands as the evening Sacrifice"¹. "I will offer to THEE," he exclaims, in another place, "the Sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD—in the Courts of the LORD'S House, in the midst of THEE, O Jerusalem"². But to multiply passages to this effect from the Psalms would seem to be an endless task, for this seems to be the permanent idea pervading the mind of the Holy David.

The Sacrifice offered in public worship is the sacrifice of prayer and praise. It is offered in each separate congregation for the Church Universal, especially for the Church of the Province, more especially for the Church of the Diocese, more especially still for the Church of the Parish and, by consequence, for all the individuals composing the same. It is offered by the assembled worshippers, being baptized persons, "continuing stedfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in Prayers"³.

Such persons, according to a passage already quoted from St. Peter, are for this purpose "an holy Priesthood," appointed to offer up

¹ Psalms, cxli. 2.

² Psalms, cxvi. 17. 19, Bible Version; of *the* bread, and in *the* prayer, according to the original.

³ Acts ii. 42.

these “spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by JESUS CHRIST”¹. As the same Apostle afterwards says, “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people²; and he gives the reason for their being so denominated; ye are what you are thus described, in order “that ye may shew forth the praises of HIM who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.” And so also St. John speaks of us as “made unto our God Kings and Priests”³.

As certain among the believers are elected from their brethren, and ordained to be Priests with reference to the higher service of the Holy Eucharist, and that they may bless the people in the name of HIM whose Ministers they are; so are the members of the Church, as their name denotes⁴, a people called out of mankind to act as Priests with reference to the general sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

Hence the offering of the morning and evening services as appointed in the Prayer Book is not confined to the Bishops and Presbyters who are

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 5.

² 1 Pet. ii. 9.

³ Rev. i. 5, 6; v. 9, 10.

⁴ Εκκλησία, an assembly or society of men called out of mankind by the Word of God.

Priests in the higher sense, although their presence is required in order that the people may be blessed. By the responses, the ejaculations, and the psalmody, ample provision is made for the people generally, to discharge their priestly function.¹

Precisely so it was with the Israelites: they were "a kingdom of Priests"². They were such, as compared with the Gentiles, for they were permitted to do what the Gentiles could not do, namely, to offer gifts to God; but this did not prevent there being a High Priest, and Priests and Levites selected from among themselves to discharge those higher services from which the great body of the people were precluded.

It would appear, then, that we are all permitted, for the sake of a crucified SAVIOUR, to draw nigh unto God with boldness³ and to offer HIM a gift,

¹ The dignity of the Christian Laity must be zealously contended for. Dr. Waterland observes that "in a large sense all good Christians are sacrificers, and, so far, Priests unto God. St. Austin, in few words, well sets forth both the agreement and the difference; observing that all Christians are Priests as they are members of CHRIST, members of one and the same HIGH PRIEST; but that Bishops and Presbyters are in a more peculiar or emphatical manner entitled to the name of Priests."—*Distinctions of Sacrifice*, Works viii. 342. He refers to the writings of many Fathers on the subject.

² Exod. xix. 6.

³ Eph. iii. 12.

even our reasonable service, our service of Prayer and Praise, which, through the Mediation of an *Interceding* SAVIOUR, is a sacrifice acceptable to GOD. It is a high and blessed privilege to be permitted thus to draw nigh with boldness to the Throne of Glory, and to offer gifts unto HIM who is all-sufficient, and needeth no gifts from us; to praise HIM who is above all praise; at the same time, it gratifies the devout and thankful heart, eager to express what, in its fulness, is unutterable, its devotion and gratitude to GOD, who is Love. It is a high and blessed privilege; that privilege in the exercise of which the employment of the redeemed will for ever consist¹. For ever will they be permitted to praise HIM whom it is their delight to praise; to serve HIM whom it is their glory to serve, but who needeth neither their praise nor their service, though HE is well pleased with both².

Now, let this view be taken of the public worship of the Church, and we shall discharge this our bounden duty and service with very different feelings from those by which we are animated when we regard public worship as only a more open manner of doing that which we do

¹ Rev. xv. 3.

² Phil. iv. 18.

when we pray in private. We shall not be among those who would palliate their offence, when they neglect to attend the services of the Church, if no sermon be preached, by the assertion that they can pray at home as well as in the Sanctuary¹.

When we regard public worship as a sacrifice, we look off from ourselves and on to God ; we are not thinking of our own good ; we are exerting all our energies to do that which it is our high privilege to be permitted to do, namely, to glorify God².

That our own souls will be benefited is most true ; they will be benefited by the mere fact of our being called off from that self-contemplation which makes men "lovers of their own selves"³. Prayer is itself beneficial to the soul. And as God is praised, God blesses ; as the Church praises God, God blesses the Church ; and in the blessing which alights on the Church, each living member, each "lively stone,"⁴ has his share. To bless a praying and a praising Church, those Priests who have authority to bless as well as to

¹ It would be well if this excuse were confined to this occasion, but it is often alleged to palliate a once-a-day attendance on the Sunday.

² 1 Cor. vi. 20.

³ 2 Tim. iii. 2.

⁴ 1 Pet. ii. 5.

offer gifts are required in all but extreme cases to be present. But while we expect and hope for the Divine Grace and Blessing, the immediate object is to do the work of Angels, and, with the Heavens and all the Powers that are therein, while we ask for blessings peculiarly needful for the Church militant, to ascribe "blessing and honor and glory and power unto HIM that sitteth upon the Throne and unto the LAMB for ever and ever"¹.

By many devout and earnest-minded persons in the present day, this view of our subject is too much disregarded. They are accustomed to judge of their religion by the state of their feelings. They therefore place the very essence of public worship in the power it may possess to excite their rapturous emotions. In sermons they desire not so much to hear of the attributes of GOD, what HIS Commandments are, and how best a people redeemed by HIS mercy² may serve HIM, as to have such appeals made to their hearts as may dissolve them into ecstasies. Again, in the reading of the prayers, they desire an impressive reader; one who shall so dwell, by

¹ Revelation, v. 11, 12, 13; vii. 11, 12.

² James, i. 18; Acts, xx. 28.

the intonations of his voice, on particular parts as to enable the hearer, who judges of his religion by the state of his feelings, to declare that, under such a reader, he derives as much benefit as from a sermon¹. The object of such a reader is not so much to address GOD as to impress the hearer, and the object of the hearer is not so much to do GOD service, to offer a sacrifice, as to have his own mind impressed. The prayers are in a manner preached; and praying becomes, under such circumstances, little more than another kind of sermon; in either case the same object is chiefly had in view. But even this will not effect its purpose. So contrary is all this to the design of the Liturgy that, under the most "impressive" reader, our services are not found to be sufficiently exciting; nor do they speak, in the estimation of such persons, sufficiently to the heart. This was the old complaint of the Puritans. In later times an attempt has been made to remedy this presumed defect in our Liturgy, by making a very great and important, but unauthorized, addition to our Prayer Book,

¹ A Sermon, indeed, there is in each Daily Service, and a Divine one, viz., the first and second lessons: and even when one or these lessons is from the Apocrypha, it is a sermon of more than ordinary weight, as being set forth as a lesson by the Church.

viz., by appending to it certain hymns of human composition at the discretion of the officiating minister. By this addition to the public worship of the Church, the Church itself is very severely, though tacitly, condemned. The object of the addition is to render religion more personal, more a matter of feeling. The persons resorting to this measure desire, in public worship, not to speak so much of GOD as of themselves; not so much of HIS Glory as of their own emotions; they would have all the services point directly or indirectly to self, to man's heart, rather than to GOD's praise; or, as they would put it, to the Glory of GOD, as exhibited in the conversion and renovation of their own souls, of which conversion and renovation they decide by the state of their feelings. Now, we pretend not to deny that the authorized services of the Church are the very reverse of all this; their tone is that, not of excitement, but of solemnity; their tendency to influence a very different class of feelings, those of awe and reverence; and whether in Confession, Psalmody, or Prayer, all is done to glorify GOD, the bearing of the services upon the feelings of man's heart being the secondary object. As I have said, the fact that unauthorized hymns are added to the services of the Church is condemnatory of the Church, supposing the excitement of

ecstatic feelings to be the proper end and object of public worship : whether it should be the end and object of public worship is a question which may be fairly asked.

We do not say that the excitement of our feelings is not occasionally needful ; we do not say that an appeal to our feelings from the pulpit may not be sometimes important : what we say is, that it is not the *end* of public worship ; it is not its chief object and design ; and that the attempt to make it so requires a deviation from the rules of the Church.

It is not when standing in the corners of the Temple¹, but in private that we are to search out our hearts², and to probe the wounds and scars which sin hath occasioned therein : it is in private that we are to give vent to the various and contending emotions that must ever rack the heart, which, while grateful for mercies undeserved³, is conscious of daily sin ; which, while cheered by hope⁴, is not a stranger to fear⁵ ; which, while animated by love, is painfully sensitive of its incapacity to express or to evince that love : it is in private that we prostrate ourselves,

¹ Matt. vi. 5.

² Lam. iii. 40.

³ Ezra ix. 13. Job xi. 6.

⁴ Heb. iii. 6

⁵ Eph. vi. 5.

with groanings which cannot be uttered, as penitent children¹, returning prodigals, before a merciful FATHER ; that we pour forth our souls in unpremeditated prayer, and by faith apply to those souls the Merits of a crucified SAVIOUR.

All this is a *preparation* for public worship ; a preparation without which we shall not be qualified to bear our part worthily in the morning and evening sacrifice of the Church. And a preparation for this great duty is needful. There is, indeed, a woe, and we ought never to forget it, upon those who take part unworthily in any divine office. The principle which applies, in its fullest extent, to that which is the highest of all offices, the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, is applicable, in due degree, to every sacred service. The sponsors who approach the Sacrament of Baptism unworthily would do well to consider this. The persons who at any time attend Church to be amused, either by the eloquence of a preacher, or the skill of a choir, from motives of curiosity, or, still worse, from malignant motives to misrepresent what they see and hear, they also would do well to consider this. We should all do well to remember that for public worship

¹ Luke xv.

private preparation is needful; that we are to kneel before our FATHER which is in secret¹ before we enter the palace of our Divine though Paternal KING, to render the homage which to HIS great Name is due: we are to watch before we pray: as the hands of the Levites were washed ere they commenced the holy service of the Sanctuary, so, before we presume to offer the spiritual sacrifice of praise and prayer, our souls must be cleansed: before we can be blessed in our deeds, our hearts must, by penitence and faith, be prepared to receive the blessing: before we join with the Church, "the Body of the faithful"², we must be sure that we are not only members of that one Body, but, through the one Spirit by whom the one Body is animated, living members: "I will wash my hands in innocency; so will I compass thine altar, O LORD"³.

Thus prepared, with intense and glowing minds, with passions calmed, and thoughts composed and purified, let us approach the Sanctuary, believing it to be the place where God's Honor dwelleth: let us enter it with the chief object, on our part,

¹ St. Matthew vi. 6.

² Office of Holy Communion. "The blessed company of all faithful people."

³ Psalm xxvi. 6,

of glorifying the Present GOD, with full faith that, on GOD's part, a blessing will be vouchsafed us while so doing. With this general impression, the result of faith, let our minds be centered, not on self and our selfish feelings, but on GOD and HIS glory. Let self be merged in the Church. Let us draw nigh as humiliated, insignificant, sinful individual portions of the Church; rejoicing in this, that we are portions of that Body to which righteousness is imputed for CHRIST's sake, and which, therefore, is permitted in CHRIST's name, to offer a Spiritual Sacrifice. Let our feeling be that of reverence and awe. Let us endeavour to abstract our minds, and realize to ourselves the fact that, if we laud and magnify the glorious name of JEHOVAH, it is with Angels and Archangels and all the company of Heaven that we do so.

And if such be the feelings and the object with which you enter the LORD's House, you will wish that attention should be paid to the very minutiae of the service, that every art in which God hath prospered us should be brought into requisition, and sanctified to the glorification of HIS Holy Name. Every thing, however trifling in itself, becomes important, when, even indirectly, connected with the Great God. You will worship HIM with the body as well as

with the soul; with attentive ears, with eyes closed upon all but sacred things, and with bended knees; as well as with contrite hearts, with the spirit and the understanding. You will desire that the public worship shall be conducted with that degree of solemnity and ceremony which shall constantly remind you of the heavenly work in which you are engaged. You will remember how King David is praised by the Son of Sirach because "he set singers before the altar, that, by their voices, they might make sweet melody, and daily sing praises in their songs. He beautified their feasts, and set in order the solemn tunes, to the end that they might praise HIS Holy Name, and that the Temple might sound from morning"¹. And you will desire that so it may be in the public assembly of the Christian Church. Engaged with Angels in an angelic work, you will desire that all things may be done after the angelic pattern, such as is recorded by Isaiah when he "saw the LORD sitting upon a Throne, high and lifted up, and HIS train filled the Temple. Above it stood the Seraphims, and one cried unto another and said HOLY HOLY HOLY is the LORD of Hosts,

¹ Eccles. xlvii. 9, 10.

the whole earth is full of His glory"¹. You will rejoice, therefore, in the anti-phonal singing of the Church, because it thus symbolizes with what is revealed of the services of the heavenly choir, and because it has been the mode in which, from the earliest ages of Christianity, the Church has drawn nigh unto God. You will delight, when you approach the Throne of Mystery as well as of Grace, to assume a tone as well as an attitude different from that which you adopt when addressing your fellow men, that tone² which is calculated to excite the solemn and mournful feelings so congenial to a devotional spirit³. You will rejoice in a service which, if not calculated to rouse extatic fervours, will kindle in us a manly enthusiasm, glowing with reverential love to God and the Lamb; which, if not calculated to impel us to the

¹ Isaiah vi. 1—3.

² Chanting is styled *της ἐκκλησίας φωνή*. We are told by Socrates (Lib. vi. c. 8) that anti-phonal psalmody, such as prevails in our Cathedrals, was introduced by St. Ignatius, the apostolical Bishop of Antioch. Valesius denies this on the authority of Theodoret, who (Hist. Lib. ii. c. 24) attributes it to Flavianus and Diodorus in the reign of Constantius. But Pagi (Crit. in Baron. an. 400, n. 10) clearly shews that Flavianus only introduced this mode of singing in the Greek tongue, at Antioch, where, in the Syrian language, the custom had prevailed before. It was probably adopted from the Jews.

³ *Τὴν κατὰ θεὸν λύπην*.

excesses of fanaticism, will breathe into our hearts a heavenly devotion, by continually reminding us that we are offering up our reasonable sacrifice in the words and in the manner in which thousands and tens of thousands of the Church Triumphant, while militant here on earth, rejoiced to resound the praises of the great CAPTAIN of their salvation¹.

To this kind of service there is, indeed, one great objection urged. If in the Christian worship, as in the Jewish, the service shall be musical, very wicked men may be allured to take part in it for their love of music. Nay, it has sometimes happened that merely on account of their skill in music, men living in open and deadly sin, have been permitted to interfere with and to secularize the service: but when this has been the case, the object has been either to make an impression, or profanely to gratify a musical taste, not to glorify God. In order to guard against this, it is most important that such services should have a character of their own; that they should possess a style and tone which shall speak to the heart attuned to divine worship; but which profane

¹ Heb. ii. 10.

persons may scorn as too antiquated and severe. This should ever be borne in mind. The Church should speak a language which her children, and they only, can understand.

At the same time we are not to argue against the use of a thing from its possible abuse. If it is possible that wicked men may profane the Sanctuary with their presence from their love of music, we know that wicked men will also profane the Sanctuary from their love of rhetoric: men are known to profess that they go to listen to an eloquent preacher with no other feelings than those with which would conduct them to a place of ordinary amusement. Such abuses are in either case to be lamented, and they have existed from the earliest times, for we find the Fathers frequently mentioning and deploring the fact. The preacher must not, however, cease from his preaching because of this abuse; nor can we admit the possible abuse of a choral service to be urged as a valid objection against that kind of service in which those persons take delight who regard public worship not only as a means of grace to man but as a sacrifice from Christian men to God.

We must warn the profane person that each time he attends the services of the Church unworthily, he takes a step downwards to the

dark abyss of everlasting destruction ; and that possibly he may have to remember in Hell the sermon at which he has scoffed upon earth. But it is for GOD'S People that the Services of GOD'S House must be prepared. It is here that they are to find a Heaven upon earth, in sending up their prayers and praises, which, blended with the prayers and praises of the Church Universal, like mingling wreaths of incense, ascend to the Throne of Glory, there to be presented by the interceding SAVIOUR, perfumed by HIS merits, before the Everlasting FATHER, to the glory of HIS Holy Name.

SERMON VIII.

CHRISTIAN TRAINING.

PROVERBS, XXII. 6.

“Train up a Child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

WE have here an injunction and a declaration, a duty prescribed and a fact stated. Because children will not, in their maturity and their old age, depart from the way in which they have been trained, for that very reason we are diligently to train them in the right way. And the truth of this fact daily experience unites with revelation to prove. Individual exceptions there may be, and there are, as there are in all the moral laws of nature; but is it not the fact, generally speaking,

that people continue through life in the same path in which they were originally trained? or if later in life they discover that they have been trained in a wrong path, and they consequently leave it, still do not early prejudices cling to them and prevent them from pursuing the right path without deviation, or, at all events, present difficulties in their way, which nothing but an energy not given to most men, or a degree of grace not commonly vouchsafed, can enable them to overcome? Is it not this that occasions the difference we witness in the customs and modes of thinking in the different nations of the world? Is it not this that makes the great difference in individual character? Why is one man a good man of business, another a good scholar, another a man of science? It is chiefly because they have been trained in these several departments of human business or human knowledge. And so also of persons educated Pagans and Mahometans, the mass will remain Pagans and Mahometans all their life long. Of persons abroad, who are brought up as Romanists, the bulk will continue to be Romanists. Of persons at home, educated without the pale of the Church, the greater part will remain seceders all their lives; or if some of them come to church, many will only use the church as a temporary

convenience, because some favourite Apollos is preaching there¹; but they will not act from a principle of deference to Church authority, or from a conviction that the Sacraments as by Her administered are the ordinary channels of Grace; they will become frequenters of the church for a while, but they will not become Churchmen. So, if you educate your children without any religious principles, irreligious for the most part they will grow up; if you give them some, but those not fixed, religious principles, they will grow up men and women moved about with every vain wind of doctrine², running now to this sect, then to that, with perhaps religious emotions, but without real, steady, consistent religious conduct.

Now, as I said before, to all this there are exceptions. Men of genius, in spite of a bad education, will distinguish themselves; individual heathens will be converted to Christianity; and among the most devoted Churchmen we may number some who were not brought up within the pale of the Church; some persons also, irreligiously educated, are leading a life of piety. Still, as I have said, instead of destroying the rule, these exceptions only serve to establish

¹ 1 Cor. i. 3, 4.

² Eph. iv. 14.

it, since the difficulty, imposed on them by their originally bad education, has rendered the subsequent triumph of their right principles peculiarly difficult.

It is no objection against all this to urge that we sometimes find the children of pious parents in this land leading impious lives. Too sadly true this is ; but GOD, you observe, has in His infallible Word declared that if men are “trained in the way that they should go, when they are old they shall not depart from it,” and in this faith the Apostle exhorts us to “bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the LORD”¹. We cannot for one half moment, therefore, doubt the truth of this fact as a general rule, subject of course to some few exceptions ; and we must account by other means than by denying the Divinely asserted rule for the circumstance that we do find pious parents sometimes deploring the delinquency of their offspring. But it does not follow that, because a man is pious himself, he must “train his children in the way they should go,” in the path (that is) which is pointed out by GOD. A man may be pious, and yet be partially in error ; and his erroneous views may lead him to adopt an

¹ Eph. vi. 4.

erroneous principle of education. He may have *intended* to educate his children religiously, but for all that, *not* have trained them in the “right way.” He may have trained them in the way *he thinks* they ought to go, which, after all, however, may not be *really* the right way; for this is a question, not of opinion, but of fact. It is not the mere excitement of religious feelings that will suffice; there must be habitual religious practice¹; not mere doctrine, but Christian discipline²; and not all kinds of discipline, but *right* discipline³; not discussions on faith, but continuance in well doing⁴; not mere Christian sentiment, but Christian principle⁵; not a few phrases, but a consistent course of straightforward honourable conduct founded on Christian faith and on Christian charity⁶.

There is, we learn from Scripture, a way in which a child ought to be trained; and to those who are trained in it a blessing is vouchsafed. Surely it becomes each parent, with deliberation, deep thought, and earnest prayer, to inquire for

¹ Gal. vi. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 5, 13. 2 Pet. iii. 17, 18.

² Luke, i. 6. 1 Cor. ix. 27. Eph. vi. 18.

³ Acts, ii. 42. Heb. x. 25. Jude, 19.

⁴ Col. i. 23; iv. 2. Gal. iii. 10. 1 Tim. ii. 15. 2 Tim. iii. 14. Heb. xiii. 15. 2 John, 9.

⁵ 1 Cor. x. 31. Col. iii. 17.

⁶ 1 Cor. xiii. 13; xiv. 1. 1 John, iv. 16; v. 1, 5.

this way, that his child may be made to walk in it ; and, surely, in addressing Churchmen, it is not too much to ask them to defer on this point to the authority of the Church, and to permit her, under the guidance of Scripture, to point out that path. Let a man educate his children consistently, not according to his self-devised theories, but according to the discipline of the Church ; and I will venture to say the exceptions to the rule will be comparatively few.

The system of the Church is in these days attended to by, alas ! too few of those who profess to be its members. Were it otherwise, the state of religion in this country would be different from that which it now is. At the same time it is more attended to than it was ; and hence we account for the fact that religion is now in a more healthy state than it was half a century ago.

Let us picture to ourselves a man training up his child as he should be trained—that is, as a Churchman. Soon after his birth he brings him to the Sacrament of Holy Baptism to be born again¹—that is, to be received of GOD as HIS

¹ See Rubrics before the Offices of Public and Private Baptism. *Church Catechism*, Art. xxv., xxvii. Tit. iii. 5. Col. ii. 12, 13. Acts. ii. 38. Gal. iii. 27.

adopted child, to be rescued from his natural state of condemnation, and to be placed in a state of grace¹. But he knows that baptismal grace will be lost unless it be cultivated². As, therefore, he provides for the helpless body of his child, so he provides for his spiritual aliment, by praying that the fruits of the SPIRIT may ripen in him³. As the child begins to speak, he teaches him to pray; not because he can understand the utility of prayer, but to form him to a habit of prayer. As reason dawns, he speaks to him of his FATHER, his SAVIOUR, his SANCTIFIER, so that faith enters his soul as imperceptibly as his reasoning powers; and then begins that study which is to be pursued till his dying day, the study of the Scriptures; not as they are too often studied, in these times, in detached texts brought forward for the support of some theory, but the study of the whole Bible, the Old Testament and the New; the study of all that has been given by GOD, that most delightful of all studies, when GOD by HIS Scriptures is speaking *to us*, and by HIS SPIRIT (if we approach the study with

¹ "This state of Salvation."—*Church Catechism*. Rom. i. 16.

1 Thess. v. 9.

² Art. xvi. Hebrews iii. 12, 13. 2 Sam. xii. 7, 13. Eph. iv. 30,
1 Thess. v. 19.

³ Gal. v. 22. 2 Cor. ix. 10. 1 Thess. iii. 12.

Phil. i. 11. 1 Cor. xv. 58.

prayerful and with thoughtful hearts) operates *in* us, that we may be capacitated for such high and holy communion. And then, too, commences a course of discipline, tempered by love, which induces him to yield obedience to parental authority; that obedience which is afterwards to be evinced towards the Providential power of God. Taught early to seek grace by “the means of grace,” the child is brought to the House of God; not because he understands the service, but because CHRIST in HIS exceeding mercy permits little children to come unto HIM. The Christian Parent is further sustained in this course by the hope that the same HOLY SPIRIT who received him in the Sacrament of Baptism, may shed afresh HIS gracious influence upon him; not to speak of the holy discipline to which by his proper deportment in the Church the child is subjected. Nor is the young Churchman allowed to consider prayer merely as a wholesome exercise; he is taught to regard it as a means to an end: a means to which he is to resort when he has any good object at heart, and especially when struggling with those evil tempers which it is his duty to overcome¹. And in this he is soon instructed, since he learns in his Catechism what

¹ Rom. xii. 19. Col. iii. 8. Eph. iv. 31. James i. 19, 20.

are the spiritual privileges to which as a Christian child he is for CHRIST's sake entitled: what the commandments of GOD are, which he is not to question, but to obey: what the mysteries of religion, which he is not to reason on, but with humility to receive. As his passions begin to burst forth, he is subjected to stricter discipline; he is taught to watch as well as to pray¹; to submit to acts of occasional mortification, and to "keep his body under" by fasting². He begins to see that religion is not a mere romantic sentiment, but the business as well as the happiness of life; and thus he is prepared for confirmation, which he seeks with meekness, as the means of conveying that grace which a Christian warrior especially needs for going forward in his warfare against "the world, the flesh, and the devil". And thus, blessed by the Bishop, whom he has been taught to respect as the successor of the Apostles, he seeks a closer union with CHRIST, and, through HIM, with GOD, in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which, from his earliest years, he has been accustomed to regard as the highest blessing and

¹ Matt. xxiv. 42; xxvi. 41. 1 Cor. xvi. 13. 1 Thess. v. 6.
1 Pet. iv. 7.

² Rom. xiii. 14. Gal. v. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 11. Matt. vi. 16; iv. 2.
Mark, ii. 20. Luke, v. 35. Acts, xiii. 2. 1 Cor. vii. 5.
2 Cor. vi. 4, 5.

privilege of a Christian man. So will the Christian parent with joy behold the germ unfolding into the bud, this into the flower, and this again into the fruit.

And will the youth thus trained not only in the doctrine but according to the discipline of the Church depart from it as he grows old? Surely the principles of the child will still actuate the man, and a manhood of activity, benevolence, and usefulness, if his career on earth be continued, will end in an old age of honour, piety, and repose. Accustomed to discipline his temper and controul his passions, to love both God and his neighbour, he is ever gentle, affectionate, unselfish, and kind. In his breast neither envy, hatred, nor malice will be permitted to lurk¹. In all his dealings honourable, straightforward, and honest, he will never insinuate, when he dares not to assert, a falsehood; he will never have recourse to the balance of deceit². Blessed in his marriage (since his marriage will be the result, not of passion or caprice, but of sanctified love), he will see his own children growing up as the polished corners of the Temple³. Inured from infancy to bow to the parental authority, he will be loyal to his Sovereign and true to his

¹ Mark, vii. 21, 22, 23. Col. iii. 8. Lev. xix. 17. James, iii. 14, 16.

² 1 John i. 7. Rev. xiv. 5.

³ Psalm, cxliv. 11, 12.

Church. More accustomed to elevate his soul in the prayers of the sanctuary and the Sacrament of the Altar, than to criticise the style of the preacher, and dogmatically to pronounce whether he does or does not preach what *he* would call "the Gospel," he runs not first after one preacher and then after another, but permits GOD in HIS Providence to choose for him a Pastor, and wherever he is, frequents his parish church, where his orderly mind delights to see all things done in an orderly and decent manner¹, according to the rubrics of his Prayer Book and the customs of the primitive Christians, while he himself gives proof of the earnestness of his profession by the regularity with which he responds where the Church commands his response, and the humility with which he kneels where the Church directs him to kneel. In weariness and painfulness, amidst the cares and distractions of life, when exposed to the evil-speaking, lying, and slandering, and all the arts of moral persecution, by which the devil ever seeks to intimidate all who are conspicuous for strength of principle and piety of purpose, in weal or woe, in sunshine or in storm, he will possess the true Catholicon, which sweetens all the bitter ingredients of life, while

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

his faith and patience, his fervent zeal and fragrant grace, communicate a blessing to all who are connected with him. In prosperity he regards himself as the almoner of a common FATHER's bounty, and suffers no fears for the morrow to check the impulses of charity¹. Nor is his charity the mere casting of a superfluity into the treasury²; it consists in denying to himself what he may at the time desire, in order to devote it to the object, whether of charity or of religion, for which his aid is requested; he scorns to give what it costs him no sacrifice to bestow, but when he gives he gives largely, because it is the price of some pleasure, some article not merely of luxury, but even of convenience denied to himself³. Hospitable to his equals, respectful to his superiors, courteous to all men, when sickness and sorrow come upon him, he is sure of the sympathy of his neighbours, while he feels himself to be a child whom his FATHER loves while HE corrects⁴, and corrects because he loves; and he remembers for his comfort that acceptable men are tried in the furnace of adversity, even as gold is tried in the fire⁵. As the sickness appears to be a "sickness

¹ Matt. vi. 19—34.

² Mark, xii. 44.

³ See Sermon I.

⁴ Prov. iii. 12.

⁵ Zech. xiii. 9.

unto death,"¹ he demands the prayers of the Church², and he finds the HOLY GHOST to be unto him a COMFORTER indeed, affording to him that peace of mind which enables him to remain tearless himself when all around are weeping; to part almost without a sigh from the family of his love, knowing that he is only going before them to their abiding-place³; and receiving, in communion with saints triumphant as well as militant, the Sacrament of his SAVIOUR'S Body and Blood, he falls asleep in JESUS⁴, his body being committed to consecrated ground, there to remain, until, waked by the last trump, it shall be re-united to the soul⁵, now gone to the unseen abode, where it rests on the bosom of his LORD in beatitude past utterance⁶.

Now such is the Christian the Church would train; and many such Christians there would be, if pious men, instead of relying on the assumed infallibility of their own judgments, would only defer in humility to the judgment of the Church.

But not to digress too far, it is clear that, if the assertion of our text be a fact, it is the duty of Churchmen to educate their own

¹ James, v. 14, 15.² Phil. ii. 27. Visitation of Sick.³ Heb. xiii. 14.⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 1.⁵ 1 Cor. xv. 52.⁶ Isaiah, lvii. 1, 2.

Luke, xxiii. 43.

Heb. iv. 3, 9.

children, the children of their household, the children of their parish, the children of their country, in the principles of the Church.

But so important a duty is this that it is not left to be inferred by logic; it is expressly enjoined by Revelation. The words of our text you have already heard: "train," not "teach," but "train your children in the way they should go." And why was it that God chose Abraham to be His servant? "I know him," He said, "that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment"¹. He was not one who waited and sought to *persuade* his children to be religious; he disciplined them to religious habits. Thus was it under the patriarchal system; and so was it also under the law: "These words" (said the LORD to His people Israel), "which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up"². And under the Gospel, what was our LORD's last injunction to St.

¹ Gen. xviii. 19.

² Deut. xi. 19.

Peter? "Feed my lambs"¹. How severe was HIS reproof of those who would have kept the "little children" from HIM!² How urgent the exhortation of St. Paul, that we should "bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the LORD"³.

And in this respect, as in every other, we find the practice of the early Church in strict accordance with the precepts of Scripture. One of the very first things we read of in ecclesiastical history is the formation of a catechetical school at Alexandria, the establishment of which is generally attributed to St. Mark the Evangelist. Whenever a Church was founded, catechists were appointed; and we read of benevolent individuals who, acting on the principles here advocated, would go into the slave-market, (for slavery was at that time universally prevalent,) and purchase children, that they might educate them in the principles of Christianity, and in "the glorious liberty of the children of GOD"⁴. And perhaps in this too we may discover the secret of the success of the early Missionaries; wherever a door seemed to be open for Missionary labours, a Bishop would be sent out, with Priests and Deacons,

¹ John xxi. 15.

² Mark x. 14, 15.

³ Eph. vi. 4.

⁴ Rom. viii. 21.

whose chief business it was to superintend the education of all the children whom the parents would place under their guidance, and so a foundation was laid broad and deep, and so the lambs were tended, and as they grew up the flock was increased.

And thus, too, in our own Church, as well before as after the Reformation, the primitive model has been followed. In the Prayer Book is a Catechism containing the principles of faith and practice and explanatory of the Sacraments, provided for the young, while in the rubrics and the canons the clergy are directed to be diligent in catechising, and "all fathers, mothers, masters and dames, are required to cause their children, servants, and apprentices, (which have not learned their Catechism,) to come to Church at the time appointed, and obediently to hear and be ordered by the curate"¹, that is, the minister invested with the cure of souls. Here is the principle broadly asserted and clearly laid down ; parents, sponsors, and guardians are enjoined to train the youth committed to their superintendence, that they may attend on the ordinances of religion, among which especial care is taken for their religious instruction. And when experience showed that this regulation was insufficient, that as the trade

¹ Rubric at end of Catechism.

of the country increased, the parents of the poor were too constantly occupied to enable them to give them that previous training which would qualify them to profit by the catechising of the Church, the same principle was still kept in view ; schools, National and Sunday, were established, not to supersede the catechising of the curate, but to prepare the children to receive his instruction, to train them in the way they should go. To these have succeeded Infant Schools, in which, when they are properly conducted, the system of moral training is still more closely applied. I am ready to admit that much remains to be done to perfect the system of education now existing ; but the principle is acknowledged, and it has only failed (where it *has* failed) by not being sufficiently acted upon.

I am perfectly aware that, in these days, persons are to be found who cavil at this kind of proceeding, and quarrel with us for insisting on the use of the Catechism in our schools ; but let them just reflect on what has now been advanced, and they will see against whom they are setting up their judgment ; at least it must be admitted that our principle is *scriptural*. But on what is the objection grounded ? My Brethren, it is this : these objectors regard religion not as a reality, but as a mere opinion.

Here is the error : They make religion to consist in opinion, and then argue that we ought to permit children to form their religious like their other opinions, for themselves, as they gain experience, vainly imagining that sincerity in error will suffice to save them from misery. Hence, also, they conclude, that men are only to be reasoned into religion ; that a man's religion must depend upon his logic ; and that, in fact, he cannot be really religious, unless he can prove the articles of his faith. Thanks be to Almighty God, these lovers of reason are woefully mistaken ; or else what would be the condition of you, my poorer brethren, who can believe : who can do more, who can serve your SAVIOUR and your GOD, but cannot investigate and examine, and arrange and weigh the multiplied evidences and arguments by which Christianity is proved and supported. Thanks be to Almighty God, men are in this respect reduced to an equality. The learned and the wise are often of the very greatest service in defending the faith and in vindicating the articles of our Creed, in confirming our convictions, and in convincing the gainsayer ; but it is not by reason, it is not by our being able to prove the doctrines that we hold ; it is by Grace through faith that we are saved¹. And so as you have faith, it

¹ Eph. ii. 8, 9. Rom. x. 10. Gal. iii. 11, 12. Rom. v. 1, 2.

matters not how or in what manner you have acquired it; it may be obtained, no doubt, by a process of reasoning, but this is not always nor indeed often the case. "Faith" (as the scripture lays down the general rule) "cometh by hearing"¹; and therefore a distinguished writer remarks, "The admonitions of preachers, the words of parents, sponsors, and friends, the conversation and acts of the brethren, all combine to impress the Christian's mind even before reason is yet able to exert itself with the truths of Revelation." We inculcate faith by authority as well as by reason. We seek first to make men obey CHRIST, and "walk in His laws which he has set before us"², convinced that they will easily "learn of the doctrine, whether it be of HIM" or not³. For, I repeat it, Christianity is a fact, and not an opinion, and as such we are to act with respect to it. It is a fact which human opinions cannot alter either the one way or the other, that man comes into the world a lost creature, prone to evil⁴; the fact remains in spite of your opinion, whatever that opinion may be; whether you think so or not, a fact it is, that you are by nature a lost, accursed, perishing creature⁵. What renders your belief in this fact

¹ Rom. x. 17.² Dan. ix. 10.³ John vii. 17.⁴ Ps. li. 5.⁵ Eph. ii. 1, 2, 3.

so important is, that, if you believe it not, you will not seek the remedy for the evil to which you are exposed. A fact it is, that the only remedy for this evil is the Grace of GOD through CHRIST¹. The fact is not altered by human opinion; if no man existed who held the opinion, the fact would be still the same; and such being the fact, we see the necessity of bringing our children to CHRIST in the Sacrament of Baptism. It is a fact independent of all human opinion, that Baptismal grace may be sinned away², and that to "grow in grace"³ it is necessary to pray⁴, and that to pray is useless except through the Mediation of Christ, and that prayer will not be answered except when offered by those who persevere in good works⁵, and that to persevere in good works is impossible without the operation of the HOLY SPIRIT, and that the HOLY SPIRIT is to be sought in the means of Grace⁶, and that while the subordinate means of grace are prayer, the study of the Scriptures and meditation, the chief means of Grace are the Sacrament of the

¹ Eph. ii. 5, 8.

² Matt. xii. 43, 44, 45.

³ 2 Pet. iii. 18.

⁴ James i. 5, 6. John xvi. 23.

⁵ Eph. vi. 18.

⁶ Eph. i. 22, 23. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Acts ii. 42. Col. iv. 2.

LORD'S Supper¹, and that the sacrament of the LORD'S Supper can only be administered by ministers duly ordained, and that therefore it is needful to continue in the fellowship of the Apostles and the communion of the Church². Now, all these facts are independent of opinion. You may refuse to believe that they are facts, and thus dare the worst; but if you believe them, you must believe them as facts.

And is it possible that you can believe that these things are really so, and yet not desire to rescue your children from the perdition to which they are born: not to wish to place them within the reach of that sanctification of the HOLY SPIRIT on which their happiness here and hereafter must depend? And if each parent must thus act towards his own child, what is the Church but the common mother of us all?³ And the care you would extend towards your own household, she would extend to all the Christian family in this country, especially to those whose parents are too ignorant or too indolent to educate them themselves.

¹ John vi. 53, 54. 1 Cor. xi. 23, 26.

² 1 Cor. x. 16. Eph. iv. 11, 12.

³ Gal. iv. 26.

The day, I hope, is not far distant when the hands of the Church will be strengthened, when her members will come forward liberally that she may have the means of doing completely what she acknowledges it to be her duty to do, of conducting on a scale commensurate with its importance the religious education of all her children. For it is obvious, as I before remarked, that our schools at present, excellent as far as they go, are insufficient and incomplete. We require a system of religious training that shall meet the wants of all classes of the community. In our more rural districts, the poor, through the care of the clergy, are generally well attended to; but the children of the yeomanry are too often neglected through the pride or the carelessness of their parents, and in our great towns there are always to be found large districts now used as the woods and forests were of old, as the hiding-place of robbers and of outcasts, where misery and vice prevail to an extent not to be imagined by those by whom it has not been witnessed, where children swarm who never hear the name Christ except to blaspheme it, and in whom the depravity of unrenewed human nature exhibits itself in all its unrestrained horrors. How the heart sickens at the thought

of the many such who are destroyed in body and in soul by the evil education they receive; for education they must have; if they are not brought up in the ways of GOD and of godliness, they are educated in the ways of Satan and of vice; trained in the way they ought not to go, they continue, through life, in the broad way of destruction. Thus sadly true is the converse of our text. And the contemplation of this fact should quicken our zeal as Christian patriots, and animate our endeavours to fence the bloom of youth from the early blasts of vice, and to train it with a firm, but gentle, hand around the tree of Life. But it has been with reference chiefly to the little ones of our own households that I have, this day, addressed you; and happy is the assurance which you have from HIM who is not a man that HE should lie, nor the son of man that HE should deceive, that if you train them in the way they ought to go, from that way when they are old they will not depart.

SERMON IX.

ON WATCHING.

ST. MATTHEW, XXVI., 40, 41.

“What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray.”

THERE is a Divine pathos in this address of our Blessed SAVIOUR to HIS slumbering Apostles which speaks directly to the heart.

Our LORD was in HIS agony. HE had entered the garden of Gethsemane, and “HE took with HIM Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith HE unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me. And HE went a little further, and fell on HIS face, and prayed, saying, O My

FATHER, if it be possible, let this cup pass from ME : nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. And HE cometh unto the Disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak." Thrice HE retired from them to pray; thrice HE returned to them, and found them not watching but sleeping; thrice did he, not, indeed, upbraid them, but deliver or insinuate a gentle reproach; just such a reproach as a friend might utter when disappointed in some return of affection; the kind of reproach which seemed to signify that something was lost on the part of those who neglected to do what a friend in his kindness had requested.

To the men of this generation the question will suggest itself as to the *use* of this Apostolic vigil. Where was the *use* of their watching, it will be asked? They were more profited, it may be said, in taking their rest, that so they might be prepared to endure the fatigue which was awaiting them; besides, their eyes were heavy, and they slept for sorrow. It was natural for them to sleep; their very drowsiness gave proof of the excess of their grief. They could not have assisted their MASTER even if they had been

watching. Before our LORD underwent HIS mysterious sufferings he had, indeed, withdrawn from them a little; intimating thereby that their interference HE did not desire. At that awful hour human consolation would not have sufficed. So intense, beyond all human thought, was the agony of the SON of GOD, that an Angel was sent from Heaven to comfort HIM.

But there are pious minds which will be contented with the answer: by their watching the Holy JESUS would have been well-pleased. And what greater delight can the pious mind experience than that which is afforded by our discovering any thing, be it great or small, the doing of which will please our LORD! How high the honor of being permitted to do any thing, the very slightest action, with which HE will *condescend* to be pleased! How blessed the privilege—that mysterious privilege which belongs pre-eminently and exclusively to Christians—of being enabled, through the indwelling of the HOLY SPIRIT, to do GOD service¹, to promote HIS Glory, and to do HIS will upon earth, even as it is done by the Angels in Heaven²!

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

² Lord's Prayer.

But in this case there is more to be said. The Apostles were commanded to watch. And obedience always reaps its reward¹. To the observance of the very least of the Commandments the spirit of a dutiful obedience will lead. We know, on a former occasion, even at the Transfiguration, these very Apostles, "Peter and they that were with HIM," were heavy with sleep; but they overcame their propensity to slumber: they watched, and, as the reward of their watching, they saw HIS Glory²; yes, "they beheld HIS Glory, the Glory as of the only BEGOTTEN of the FATHER"³. And, had they watched on this occasion, it may be that a deep insight might have been vouchsafed to them into those mysteries which had made their MASTER sorrowful; they might have seen the vision of Angels; their minds might have been nerved for the approaching trial under which they lamentably failed—when they all forsook⁴, and Peter denied HIM⁵. At all events, they would have pleased their Divine LORD. On HIS return HE would have been pleased to find those whom HE had elected

¹ 1 John, vii. 17. 1 Sam. xv. 22.

² Luke, ix. 32. ³ John, i. 14. ⁴ Matt, xxvi. 56.

⁵ St. Matt, xxvi. 70, 72.

to be HIS nearest friends on earth watching if so be they might render HIM service ; and to them, thus watching, HE might HIMSELF have deigned to disclose the secrets of HIS Kingdom.

Now, my Brethren, what our LORD said unto HIS Apostles HE saith unto all : Watch ! HE directs us to watch as well as to pray. “ Watch ye, therefore, and pray always”¹, says St. Paul, who himself was in watchings often²; “ Watch ye, stand fast in the faith”³; “ Be ye, therefore, sober,” saith St. Peter, “ and watch unto prayer”⁴.

That these and similar passages do undoubtedly refer to that general state of watchfulness over their conduct, in which all must live who know that they may die any hour, and who fear the Judgment which must come some hour, this is not to be denied, it is rather much to be insisted on. But the general duty thus asserted does not preclude, it rather implies a more particular duty ; certain particular and minute acts seem necessary to make up the general duty of watchfulness ; so that it is much to be doubted whether they who practise them not are capable of being so watchful, in the

¹ Rom. xiii. 11.

² 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

³ 2 Cor. xi. 27.

⁴ 1 Pet. iv. 7.

general sense, as they ought to be. You will observe that in our text, as in other places, the duty of watching is placed in juxta-position with the duty of praying. We ought always to be in a prayerful state; the thought of God and an internal solicitation of His blessing ought to accompany our every action; but this does not exclude the duty of particular prayer, at appointed times. Neither ought the duty of being ever on the watch against sin to prevent our appointing times and seasons for more special watching.

Let us then see what is meant by watchfulness as connected with prayer; what it is to "Watch and Pray." A man is said to watch when he is cautiously observing what is now occurring, when he is attentively considering something that has been done, but of which his notions are confused, or when he is anxiously awaiting something, he knows not what, that is about to take place. By watching, then, in its connexion with prayer, we mean either an attentive contemplation of the truths of Revelation, so as to bring them vividly before our minds; or a solemn consideration of our principles, with a minute examination of the circumstances under which we are placed, so as to apply those principles to our own conduct; or a calm but wakeful state of mind prepared to receive those

impressions which the HOLY SPIRIT, with WHOM we are in fellowship, may vouchsafe to convey to us. In prayer we avail ourselves of the Intercession of our Blessed and only SAVIOUR to communicate our wants and wishes to our Heavenly FATHER. When watching we assume the attentive attitude of those who are expecting communications from GOD. So that by watching we may, for the most part, understand the placing of our minds in an attitude of meditation.

That it is incumbent upon us thus to act, that we ought to watch at particular times, is recognised and forced upon us by the Church, in the fact of her appointing vigils. By vigils we mean watchings, and by appointing vigils before the greater festivals she points out to us the duty of preparing our minds, by meditation upon the facts which those festivals commemorate, before we offer unto the LORD our sacrifice of Prayer and Thanksgiving.

So important was this duty considered by the primitive Christians, that they would prolong their watchings, called *pernoctations*¹, through the whole night. Long before public worship

¹ See Bingham's *Eccl. Antiq.* book xiii. cap. 9, sec. 4.

commenced they were to be seen watching in the Church, abstracting their minds and meditating on holy subjects ; and thus, when the service did commence, they had realized to themselves the Divine PRESENCE and that world of Spirits by which they were surrounded ; and they were enabled to infuse their whole souls into the performance of their spiritual duties.

But, alas ! in these days this duty is scarcely recognised. For this is an age of action rather than of thought. We are restless ; always anxious to be doing. Even in sacred things we act with a vehemence caught from the busy world around us ; we seek by our own activity to hasten the events which God only can accomplish, instead of abiding in that calm patience which, while it does zealously what its hand findeth to do¹, leaves the result in perfect resignation to the will of God². In such an age to devote hours to meditation, to the silence of the heart, and to patient watching, is regarded as mere idleness and waste of time ; since it is neither action nor yet that rest which is considered to be necessary because preparatory to action. Men

¹ Eccl. ix. 10. Col. iii. 23.

² Hab. ii. 3. James, v. 8.

can listen to sermons because the mind is gaining information, but to meditate on the information thus received they regard as idleness; they will join in vocal prayer because it is doing something, but to yield up their mind to holy influences before prayer is offered, this they will seldom do. It is from the unwatchful state of our minds that we complain so loudly if the services of the Church are a few minutes longer than usual; and it is because men consider this duty as a mere waste of time, an unprofitable thing, that Communicants are so restless while the Holy Sacrament is administered to their brethren. Nay, this very time which the primitive Christians delighted in, as a time for watching imposed upon them by the Church, is so vehemently complained of, that the complaint is made a pretext with some for altering the very services of the Church, instead of suggesting the question of our LORD, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?"

And what is the result? May we not fairly attribute to this a fact which we may lament but we can scarcely deny, namely, the inconsistency between the conduct and the profession of Christians? How often do we hear men professing to regard the Church as the House of GOD, and yet comporting themselves therein in a

manner which they would deem unbecoming in the abode of a fellow-man! How often do we hear them praising the Liturgy, and yet neglecting the observance of those very rules which have been the subject of their eulogy! How often do they praise a sermon, and immediately commit the very actions which are in that sermon condemned, or neglect the duties which it enforced! We hear them sometimes insisting on the importance of divine worship, and yet we see them careless at prayer, attentive only when the preacher ascends the pulpit. We hear them vindicating the Sacraments as means of grace, and yet when frequent communions are offered to them, partaking of that sacrament but once in a month! We hear them declaiming on the necessity of observing the Third Commandment, and yet at the same introducing God's name on occasions the most trivial. They will argue on our LORD's Divinity, and yet they will speak of HIM with no more of reverence than they would speak of a mere man. All this, and I might go on through a long list of similar offences committed by persons whose opinions may vary, but whose practice in this respect is the same, is to be attributed to the fact that men will not, of some it may be said they cannot,

meditate ; and they cannot meditate, because meditation is a habit of the mind, and the habit of meditation cannot be formed without watching, and to watch is a duty wilfully neglected.

If we would amend in this respect, our endeavour must be, when we desire to meditate, to produce in ourselves that state of mind which will enable us to say with the Psalmist, "I will hear what the LORD shall speak"¹, or with Samuel, "Speak LORD for thy servant heareth"²: that is to say, we must endeavour to obtain for the time a calmness of temper, an abstractedness of mind, almost a deadness to the external things by which we are surrounded. This is not difficult to those who have from early years been accustomed to this abstraction of mind ; though it is, of course, as I have said before, difficult to those who have not been habituated to it. But suppose we are determined to form the habit : the commencement is made ; distractions come ; the imagination wanders to the world ; frivolous, if not worse, thoughts arise ; the mind becomes disturbed, (perhaps till this is the case we are scarcely conscious whither our thoughts are tending,) but this rouses our consciousness ; and what shall we do then ? Surely, we may instantly raise our minds in

¹ Psalm lxxxv. 8.

² 1 Sam. iii. 9, 10.

mental prayer to the GOD of mercy, the GOD into whose PRESENCE we mentally place ourselves, and we may say, "THOU seest, LORD, my inability and my distress ; THOU seest how unable I am to fix my mind even for a few minutes on things sacred and invisible ; THOU seest how cold is my heart, how dead to things spiritual : Oh ! for THY dear SON'S sake, give unto me, as I now approach THEE in HIS name, the Spirit of Peace and the Spirit of Love." In some such prayer, without our voice being heard even though we move our lips¹, we may pour out our souls to GOD, and the habit of meditation will soon be formed. Though we do not yet enjoy its pleasures, we are engaged in the duty ; the mind so praying will, while it prays, grow calm, and GOD will assuredly hear the prayer so offered, and pour into the heart whence it issues the spirit of a Divine Peace : not at once, not perhaps to-day, nor to-morrow, but in the fulness of HIS own good time, and as it seemeth unto HIM best. It is thus that we are to drive out *worldly* thoughts, by the bringing in of *spiritual* thoughts, so leaving for the former no place ; and then, when the mind is calm, we are to give it up to the contemplation of such holy subjects as seem to

¹ 1 Sam. i. 13.

be by circumstances suggested to it. As a babe on the arms of its mother, let the soul rest, by self-dedication, on the bosom of our God, while we seek to meditate on the great God who is above us, who is around us, who is in us; on JESUS the SAVIOUR, HIS humiliation, HIS loving-kindness, HIS Cross, HIS Passion, HIS Resurrection, HIS Ascension, HIS Presence, our union with HIM effecting our union with GOD, since HE is GOD as well as man: on the HOLY GHOST, and on all spiritual Beings; these, and such as these, are to be the objects of our meditation; that meditation which is always accompanied by a mental prayer that with GOD and all the Holy Ones of GOD we may be each day in more close communion. It is by holy meditation that we realize to our minds the facts which are declared in the Gospel; that we *see*, as it were, CHRIST in the flesh, Christ in glory; that our minds are sent back to the time when HE hung upon the Cross amid the quaking of the earth, and the rending of the rocks, and the darkening of the sun¹; that our souls behold the Gethsemane where HE wept². Our meditation may be minute, particular, circumstantial; since the

¹ St. Luke, xxiii. 44, 45.² St. Matt. xxvi. 36.

object of it is to realize, to make real to ourselves, facts which are not to be coldly acquiesced in, as the deductions and discoveries of philosophy, but to be brought before us as facts not merely which *have* been, but which are, are even now, deeply, vitally, interesting to us; facts to be applied by faith to the well-being of our souls.

Or, again, our meditation may be directed to abstract truth: to some maxim, some duty, some position, new to us, or brought at this time more vividly before us. A sermon, without subsequent meditation on the part of those who hear it, will profit little. But when any truth or maxim is brought before the mind, upon that one maxim or truth the mind accustomed to meditation will abide. We shall not pass from one subject lightly to another; but, as honey in the mouth, which we keep there till it is gradually melted, the truth or maxim will be kept in our mind until it is distilled into our soul: until it is formed into one of our elements of thought.

Perhaps one of the reasons why this sacred and pleasant exercise has fallen into disuse of late years, in our branch of the Church Catholic, is, that it may lead weak, though pious, minds sometimes to enthusiasm: some of the wild dreams of fanaticism may be attributed to an

indulgence in meditation on sacred subjects. But better to be enthusiastic than dull, and dry, and cold, and spiritually defunct. And surely we are not to think lightly of that which has been the employment of Prophets, and Apostles, and Saints, and Martyrs, because it may be abused. And it has been abused: by whom? By those who have refused to recognize the authority of the Church: who have set up their own opinions in opposition to the Church's teaching, and not weighed their imaginations in the just balance by the shekel of the Sanctuary¹. It is by *our* deference to the authority of the Church, on the other hand, that *we*, my brethren, obtain perfect freedom²; that we meditate without fear³; that we, by meditation and through the HOLY GHOST, bring our minds into connexion with the world of Spirits, without any dread of evil consequences; because we are prepared, if our thoughts are running in a course which the Church condemns, immediately to recal them; to make her doctrine the test by which to try the truth of our reflections: if test to try these we need, which, to those who are imbued with the spirit of the Church, cannot be often necessary.

¹ Numb. iii. 47.² 1 Pet. ii. 16.³ Job. ix. 32. Luke, i. 74.

But whatever be the abuses to which this exercise is liable, that it is our duty thus to exercise our minds is evident from the example of the holiest men. Night and day did the Psalmist meditate in the Law of the LORD¹: he communed with his own heart on his bed, and was still²: he meditated in the night watches: the Psalms abound with exhortations to meditation: many of the Psalms are themselves, if I may so speak, vocal meditations. And what are the Psalms? They are the inspired Liturgy of the Universal Church: the Church under the Law and the Church under the Gospel: The HOLY GHOST supplied the words, not for the Psalmist only; he supplies them now to all who worship God in spirit and in truth, and the words he puts into our mouths are these: "Mine eyes shall prevent the night-watches, that I may meditate upon thy word"³: "I will meditate on thy precepts and have respect unto thy ways"⁴: "I remember the days of old, I meditate on thy works"⁵. This, as I have said, was the employment of holy men of old, under the former and under the present dispensation. And while

¹ Psalm i. 2. ² Psalm iv. 4.

³ Psalm cxix. 148.

⁴ Psalm cxix. 15.

⁵ Psalm cxliii. 5.

all nature abounds with the materials for holy thought to the mind accustomed to this exercise, it is one of the very purposes, never to be forgotten, in the decoration of our Churches to present objects to the eye which may suggest topics for meditation and mental prayer to the soul. Before the Reformation our churches were adorned with pictures, and statues, and relics: these were abused in our Church as they are in many foreign churches, to the purposes of a gross idolatry, and they were, in consequence, removed from our Sanctuaries. But they who removed them still recognised the principle on which they were originally introduced, by causing a variety of texts to be inscribed on the walls, and by enjoining by Canon the erection at the east end of the church of the two Tables of the Decalogue². As the disposition to meditate in Church has died away, these helps to meditation have gradually disappeared; and the walls of our churches have been desecrated, instead, by tablets of marble, sometimes supported by heathen gods and goddesses, intended to tell us of the wisdom or the wealth, the eloquence or the valour, of some proud son of earth: the record of whose worldly wisdom or worldly wealth has certainly no ten-

² Canon 82.

dency to suggest thoughts befitting the sanctity of a church; unless it be to a very meditative, a very spiritualized mind, which can pass at once from the blazonry above to the dust and rottenness below, and so to meditation on time and eternity, on Heaven and on hell, the four last things.

By those who would recal the mind of piety to a neglected exercise, and would make the House of Prayer the House of Meditation also, attention is now paid to these matters; and such emblems are erected in our sanctuaries which primitive practice sanctioned, and which may better harmonize with the thoughts which the sanctuary is calculated to inspire, without debilitating the mind to the will-worship of superstition¹.

Indeed, if we enter fully into the right idea of public worship, if we regard it as the sacrifice of prayer and praise offered up by our own company in communion with the Church militant and triumphant to the great God of Heaven and earth, who for an interceding SAVIOUR's sake is well pleased with what we do, we shall prepare ourselves for this most solemn office by watching. But not only shall we watch before public prayer: we shall watch unto prayer in private. Many persons complain

¹ Col. ii, 23.

that they are not in a humour to pray, when the appointed hour of private prayer hath arrived; and it is to be feared that they make this an excuse for not praying at all. If we recognize the duty of *watching*: we shall rather say, continue on your knees; watch until the spirit of prayer hath come unto you: watch one hour; watch two hours: remain on your knees watching all the day, yea, all the night; but rise not even for food until you have brought your mind into a prayerful state.

And, verily, so doing we shall have our reward: for accustomed to watch for holy thoughts, for inspirations from the SPIRIT of God, we shall have our minds turned to God, not in the Sanctuary only, but even when we go forth, like Isaac, unto the fields to meditate¹, we shall hear in each rural sound a voice preaching to us of God; we shall see in each rural sight an Evangelist pointing to the Heavens. We shall learn to look on the ant till it tells us of our sluggishness in things spiritual²; to look on the ox knowing its owner and the ass its master's crib³, until we think of our OWNER and our MASTER; we shall "ask the beasts and

¹ Gen. xxiv. 63.

² Prov. vi. 6—11.

³ Isaiah i. 3.

they shall teach us; the fowls of the air and they shall tell us; we shall speak to the earth and it shall teach us, and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto us¹; we shall look to the Heavens and they will declare unto us the glory of God; the firmament will shew His handy work; one day telleth another and one night certifieth another; there is neither speech nor language but their voices are heard among them². As we look upon the lambs in the sheepfold, the thought will arise of redeeming love; of ourselves as of sheep that have gone astray³, and of HIM who was brought as a lamb to the slaughter⁴; of HIM, the LAMB of GOD which taketh away the sins of the world⁵; when we hear the gentle voice of the dove amid the trees that are shaken with the wind, we shall think of HIM who in likeness of a dove came down from Heaven⁶. We shall meditate on the mysteries of Regeneration. Hence will ensue that calmness and complacency of soul which will fit us for those communications from GOD for which we shall watch as well as pray.

¹ Job. xii. 7. ² Ps. xix. 1, 2, 5.

³ Daily Confession. Isaiah liii. 6. ⁴ Isaiah liii. 7.

⁵ John i. 29. ⁶ Matt iii. 16.

Nor will this incapacitate us for the active duties of our station. Meditation and spiritual watching will no more interfere with the dutiful activity of our souls than sleep interferes with the activity of the body ; as the body is preserved in health by sleep, so is the soul strengthened and refreshed by holy meditation : as from his bed the ploughman, re-invigorated, rises to his daily labour, so from meditation, the result of watching, whether in the sanctuary, the chamber, or the field, the true Christian, justified by the Blood and sanctified by the SPIRIT of his REDEEMER, betakes himself to the duties of his calling with a mind less liable to the perturbations of passion ; with affections spiritualized ; with a contented spirit ; with a right appreciation of the things of this world ; with steadiness of principle ; with deep humility ; with elevation of character ; with aspirations after perfection ; with an ardent love to God ready to be condensed into showers of beneficence, and so to alight with good will on man.

If such be the probable results, (I ought to say, in greater or in less degree according to circumstances, the *certain* result,) of watching, to that duty we may well be exhorted ; and if we neglect that duty now, we may be sure that it is but self-deception to suppose that we should

have observed it had we been placed under the circumstances of the Apostles. When we pay ourselves the compliment to think that we should have watched when they slumbered, we are thinking of our suffering SAVIOUR, as indeed HE was, the everlasting SON of the FATHER. But, we are to remember, that although HE was GOD incarnate, the glories of the GODHEAD were at that time veiled in the flesh; although the Disciples received HIM as the MESSIAH, yet their eyes beheld nothing but a man¹, full of grace², without doubt, but still a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief³. With the Man of sorrows they sympathised; but the awful depth of those sorrows they knew not; they understood not the tremendous mystery which was in the act of being accomplished near them. There was no eye of faith to penetrate beyond the surface; and after a time, therefore, they sought comfort for themselves and yielded to the influences of slumber.

Warned by their failure, let us believe that we, even as they were, may be surrounded by mysteries without our knowing it. We know not what mighty ends may be accomplished near us, through means apparently the most insignificant. Had the Apostles watched they would have seen

¹ Mark, vi. 3.² John, i. 14.³ Isaiah, liii. 3.

and known more of what was at that time taking place, as when they *did* watch they saw their MASTER'S glory. It may be so with us. We see here, in this sanctuary, what to the careless appears to be but a splendid room. We see in the font nothing more than a basin of stone. We see in the altar nothing more than a decorated table. But if we are watchers; if we watch unto prayer, and give our minds unto meditation, we shall then penetrate below the surface. We shall, with the eye of faith, see the glory of the LORD filling the House of the LORD¹. We shall behold the regenerating SPIRIT acting at the Font². We shall behold the great HIGH PRIEST, the one, the only SAVIOUR, ready to bless us at the Altar³. We shall look on the things which are temporal and visible, but we shall be in communion with the things that are invisible and eternal. Watch, then, my Brethren, Watch and pray !

¹ 1 Kings, viii. 11.

² Gen. i. 2. Heb. x. 22.

³ John, vi.

SERMON X.

THE LORD'S DAY.

COLOSSIANS, II. 16, 17.

"Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days, which are a shadow of things to come."

THAT the first day of every week should be devoted to God and the services of religion, works only of charity and necessity being permitted, this is a point upon which all parties and persons, in this country, seem, at this time, to be agreed. There may be a difference of opinion as to the propriety of making the civil laws more stringent upon that subject; but no one professing Christianity wishes to relax the laws as they now are. Again there may be some

dispute as to the best mode of observing the day, but as to the fact that the first day of the week ought to be kept as a Holy Day there seems to be no controversy.

To the serious thinker who investigates this subject, this unanimity of sentiment among all classes, persons, denominations, and persuasions calling themselves Christians, must appear the more remarkable, because there are many other duties for which much higher sanction can be produced from Scripture on which such unanimity is not found to exist. If men reply sincerely to the question, ‘Why do you observe so strictly the LORD’S Day?’ the answer must generally be, Because I have been taught from my childhood to regard that day as holy; because I see it to be so regarded by religious persons around me; because I feel that in acting contrary to this general practice I should be doing wrong. There is, in short, a traditionary reverence for this institution. We see in its observance a remarkable instance of the silent force of custom and tradition; and we can always reply to gain-sayers who ask our reason for this observance, “It is the custom of our Church and of all the Churches of GOD”¹. Much more than this may

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 16.

be said on the subject, but before we proceed to the further investigation of it, let us examine what is asserted with respect to it by those who set out with calling upon men to be guided by the Bible, and by the Bible exclusively of all other modes of ascertaining the Divine Will, and then insist upon the LORD'S Day being kept with all the strictness of a Jewish Sabbath¹.

For this purpose they quote the Fourth Commandment as given in the Twentieth Chapter of Exodus, and maintain that this commandment, as one of the ten, is still obligatory. But what says the Fourth Commandment? It says, indeed "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day"; but then it expressly adds, "*the seventh* day is the Sabbath of the LORD"; "the LORD blessed the *seventh* day and hallowed it". Now by the Jews this commandment is kept; they observe the Sabbath on the seventh or last day of the week, Saturday. But where do we find any denomination of Christians so doing? There have been Christian sects which have done so; but if there be any such now, they are in such obscurity as not to be known. Indeed, men are not likely to subject themselves, in these days, to

¹ Exod. xx. 10.; xxxi. 15.; xxxv. 2. Lev. xxiii. 2.
Deut. v. 14.

great inconvenience for their religious principles ; and as the inconvenience would be great, were Christians to be divided in their practice in this respect, we do not expect the custom extensively to prevail of keeping the Sabbath on the Saturday.

We see, then, that a reference to the Fourth Commandment is insufficient to establish the sanctity of the LORD'S DAY. The plain Christian is referred to the Fourth Commandment, but that Commandment his very teacher violates. The Fourth Commandment directs the observance of a particular day ; the seventh day of the week. And if you neglect, therefore, to observe that special day, but still hold the Commandment to be binding, you must bring forward some passages of Scripture which expressly state that the day has been changed by that same Divine authority by which it was originally fixed. When was that change of day enacted ? Where are the passages of Scripture which say, Remember that thou keep holy, *not the seventh, but the FIRST DAY* of the week ?

Now, the usual answer given to these questions is this : It appears from Scripture that the Apostles and first Christians were accustomed to come together for public Worship on the first

day of the week. For example, St. Luke tells us that "upon the first day of the week, when the Disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them"¹; St. Paul seems to allude to the custom when he says, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as GOD hath prospered him"². And there is a very obvious reason why they should have delighted to come together on the first day of the week; it was on this day that HE, Who died for our sins, rose again for our justification; HE died for our sins on the Friday; HE rose from the dead on the Sunday. HIS next appearance to HIS Disciples seems to have taken place on the first day of the week following³; and it was on the first day of the week that GOD the HOLY GHOST first manifested HIS Presence in the Church as the PARACLETE⁴.

Now, these facts of Scripture are satisfactory as far as they go; they show that there are good reasons for keeping the first day of the week as a festival, and that on these reasons the Apostles and their Disciples acted. But you will observe that the question is not whether the Apostles kept the first day of the week as a holy day, but whether they made an alteration by Divine

¹ Acts xx. 7. ² 1 Cor. xvi. 2. ³ John xx. 26.

⁴ Cf. Acts ii. 1, 3. Levit. xxiii. 15, 16.

authority in the Fourth Commandment; *whether they changed the Sabbath*. The Fourth Commandment was given by ALMIGHTY GOD, and none but ALMIGHTY GOD could abrogate it: or, without abrogating it, ALMIGHTY GOD could make an alteration in it: but HE only could do this; and the question is, what proof can be produced from Scripture that HE commanded a change? It is assumed, on the hypothesis under consideration, that the law was not *abrogated*, but that it was *changed*, so far as it related to a particular day. But by GOD only could the change be effected; and yet where is it said in Scripture that HE *did* make the change? Let this be answered by the Bible, and the Bible only. I repeat, it is no answer to this question to say, the Apostles were accustomed to meet for breaking of bread and preaching on the first day of the week. The Church of England commands us to keep holy the Sunday in every week. Suppose, in some distant land, this fact were denied, and it were said the Church of England has changed its holy day, it would be no proof of this were the person who made the assertion to call for a Prayer Book, and show therefrom that the Church of England provides in her rubrical and other directions for the keeping holy of every Friday and every Saint's day.

Besides, if the Apostles appear from Scripture to have attended religious meetings occasionally on the first day of the week—and this is all that can be proved—they did the same on the seventh day of the week, that is, on the ancient Sabbath. It was upon the Jewish Sabbath that St. Paul preached to the Philippians, and baptized Lydia with her household¹. Among the Thessalonians he reasoned three Sabbath-days together, *i. e.*, Jewish Sabbaths (Saturdays) out of the Scriptures². At Corinth he did the same every Sabbath-day (Saturday), with the Jews and Greeks³; and other instances might be produced to the same effect. So that their observance of the first day is no proof that they changed the Sabbath.

Now, all this is contrary to the mode of enforcing the observance of the LORD'S DAY at present in vogue. Men assert, without proof, that the Sabbath was Divinely changed. They then speak of Sunday as *the* Sabbath, and so bring the Fourth Commandment, and all those passages of the Old Testament which refer to the Jewish Sabbath, to bear upon it. They love to speak of Sunday as *the* Sabbath, in order to convey this impression. But, surely, this is to handle deceitfully the Word of God⁴. This is to make it speak more than it

¹ Acts xvi.

² Acts xvii.

³ Acts xviii.

⁴ 2 Cor. ii. 17.

does speak. And, moreover, this notion of the change of the Sabbath by Divine appointment, and of the consequent obligation of the Fourth Commandment, was a dream, in the first instance, of the schoolmen ! We hear many denunciations of practices introduced in ages of the Church later than the Apostolical age ; but here we have a doctrine enforced, which owes its birth to the Divines of those ages, which it is customary to style the dark ages¹.

These are the difficulties on this subject to be encountered by those who profess to be guided by the Bible, and by the Bible only, as interpreting itself. Let us now see how the subject stands when scrutinized by the eyes of a Churchman.

First of all we take the other side of the alternative, and, on the authority of Scripture, we contend that the Fourth Commandment, being a part of the ceremonial law, has been *abrogated*. It is expressly so declared in the words of our text. "Let no man judge you in meat or in drink ; or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days,

¹ See "Duty of Maintaining the Truth." A Sermon preached before the University of Cambridge, by the late Rev. H. J. Rose. And also "An Apology for the Study of Divinity," by the same Author.

which are a shadow of things to come." "There is," says St Jerome, "no sermon of the Apostle, either by epistle or by word of mouth, in which he does not labour to prove that all the burdens of the law are now laid aside; that all those things which were before in types and figures, namely, the *Sabbath*, Circumcision, the New Moons, and the three Solemn Festivals, upon the preaching of the Gospel, ceased"¹.

We have seen, indeed, that the Apostle did frequent the Synagogue on the Sabbath-day, but that evidently was not out of regard to the Sabbath, but because it was a convenient season to meet the Jews, whom he was anxious to exhort; the ordinance itself, he tells us, was abrogated².

But though a particular law be abrogated, the principle of it, the spirit of it, is not to be forgotten. The particular laws laid down for public worship in the Old Testament are repealed; but still public worship is a duty, though some in the Apostles' time seem to have thought otherwise. The particular ceremonies are no longer to be observed; but we gather from God's appointment of ceremonies, that ceremonies in His worship are

¹ Prefat. in Galat.

² Rom. vi. 14. Gal. v. 14.

to be attended to¹: the particular laws relating to marriage are no longer obligatory, but, in restricting the marriage of kindred, our own laws have been formed on the principle and in the spirit of the Levitical²: the particular laws relating to tithes were applicable only to the Jews, but the ordinance of GOD has been taken for a direction by Christian nations³; and so is it with respect to the Fourth Commandment.

That Commandment, among the others, has been read, ever since the Reformation, at the Communion Service in the Church of England; and we are taught to pray that our hearts may be inclined to keep it.

The Church here does not intend that we should pray for grace to keep the letter of that Commandment; for the letter of the Commandment she teaches us to transgress when she keeps holy not the seventh day, but the first. What is meant, then, is, that we must act according to the *spirit* of that Commandment. When we use the same petition after the Fifth Commandment, the Church intends us to understand that Commandment in its whole spirit, as relating not only to our parents but to the Queen also, and all that are put in authority under her; to all our

¹ Heb. ix. 1.

² Lev. xviii.

³ Gen. xxviii. 22. Lev. xxvii. 32. Numb. xviii. 21.

governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters ; in short, “all our betters”¹: this is the spirit of the Commandment. Nor does she here insist upon the literal fulfilment of the promise: we expect, for obedience, not long life on earth, but those spiritual blessings of which the temporal blessings of the Jews were typical². And it is to the spirit, not to the letter violated by the Church, that we have respect in the case of the Fourth Commandment—and what is that? Surely that we should devote to the service of GOD a seventh portion of our time.

It seems probable that some rule with reference to the dedication of a seventh portion of their time to the service of GOD was delivered to the Patriarchs. The fact is not uncontroverted, and cannot be so proved as, on the principle of our Sixth Article, to be enforced as a matter of faith. Some writers suppose that there is an allusion to a Sabbath in the Book of Job, where mention is made of a day when the Sons of GOD came to present themselves before the LORD³. In the History of Jacob mention is made of a week⁴, that is, of the division of time into seven days ; and in the Third Chapter of the Book of Genesis,

¹ Catechism.—*Book of Common Prayer*.

² Heb. ix. 8, 9.

³ Job ii. 1.

⁴ Gen. xxix. 27, 28.

if we take the marginal reading, we find that Cain and his brother Abel made a feast "at the end of the days"—at the end of what days?¹ It is probable that allusion is made here to the six days of labour; and the probability is increased when we consider the evil character of Cain. It seems less probable that he should come voluntarily forward with a grateful heart to worship his MAKER, than that he should carelessly comply with a custom to which he had been early habituated. This would, of course, be settled at once, if we were to understand the expression in the second Chapter of Genesis, "God blessed the Seventh Day, and sanctified it; because that in it HE had rested from all HIS work which God created and made," as signifying any thing more than an anticipation of the Jewish Sabbath. But it is clear that this must have been said anticipatory of the Jewish Sabbath, or else the Apostles would hardly have spoken of the ordinance of the Sabbath as abrogated; and we should be guilty of a violation of Scripture in not still keeping holy the Seventh Day.

But, whether this law was laid down from the beginning or not, this we gather from the Fourth Commandment, compared with the teach-

¹ Gen. iv. 3.

ing of the Church, that ALMIGHTY GOD, who might demand the whole of our time, requires at least a seventh portion of it at our hands: this is the very least. In stating a duty, or in asserting articles of faith, the Church does not attempt to teach us *all* that we ought to do, or *all* that we ought to believe. She enforces and asserts the minimum. The very least that a man can believe and yet be called a Christian, that which is required of an adult as the preliminary to the first step he takes in the Christian life, ere Christian life can be conferred upon him, is the acceptance of the articles of the Apostles' Creed. But as he advances, as he reads, and marks, and learns, and inwardly digests the Holy Scriptures, he must believe a great deal more than is expressed in the Creed, though perhaps the whole of our faith is implied therein: he must fill up the outline. So is it with regard to the Fourth Commandment. And one of the evil consequences which have resulted from the Judaizing system, which, invented by Romish schoolmen, is so strongly enforced by English Protestants—that system which makes the observance of the LORD'S Day to rest on the Fourth Commandment *only*, and of thus acting upon our fears instead of appealing to our love, is this: that men have been led to suppose that

by abstaining from work and from a certain class of amusements on this day, they have done all that is required of them in this particular. Hence the emptiness of our Church at week-day services and the neglect of Saint-days. Whereas they who walk by love will desire to devote every day to God's service: to them God seems to say in the Fourth Commandment not, 'I demand from unwilling worshippers a seventh portion of their time'; but, 'knowing you to be desirous to worship me daily, but that you are sore let and hindered in the accomplishment of your desire by the duties of your calling, I will accept even this at your hands; but remember that less than a seventh no worldly avocations should prevent you from devoting to My service.' This is the teaching of the Church, for she provides for every day the same services as for Sunday, morning and evening: not distinguishing Sunday from other days, as her undutiful and unfaithful children too often do, by having, on that day, public worship, and not on any other¹; but by having on that day, and on the Saints' days, in addition to public worship, the holy Communion. She calls

¹ See List of Holy Days in the Book of Common Prayer.

upon us to worship GOD in HIS holy Church every day, but *especially* every Sunday and Holy Day¹. And let me ask, Do those who come to Church once or twice on the LORD'S Day, but never cross the threshold of the Sanctuary on the week day, dedicate really and truly a seventh portion of their time to GOD? They would do well, if they wish to act up to the spirit of the Commandment, at the very least to make a point of attending on the Saints' days, that so they might supply their lack of service².

But to return to our more immediate subject : a seventh portion of our time : and among days one day in seven : is at the least to be devoted to more immediate communion with ALMIGHTY GOD. And, since, if no particular day be appointed, men would soon fall into the non-observance of even one day ; since, moreover, the ALMIGHTY GOD selected for the Israelites one particular day out of the seven, the seventh day ; they who have received authority in the Church from the LORD to bind as well as to loose³, while exhorting us to

¹ By the Appointment of Special Lessons—Collect, Gospel, and Epistle.

² Phil. ii. 30.

³ John xx. 23.

⁴ Acts ii. 46.

be, as the Apostles were, "daily in the Temple⁴," have bound us to abstain from all works but those of necessity and charity, and to attend for public worship, at least, on the first day of the week¹.

The line of argument which has here been pursued was that which was adopted by most of the Reformers of the sixteenth century. It is said that Calvin, to make the separation between his sect and the Catholic Church the more apparent, admitting the abrogation of the Fourth Commandment, desired and designed to appoint Thursday as the weekly festival, avoiding Sunday as the day adopted by Catholics, Saturday as the Sabbath of the Jews, Friday as that of the Mahometans². But we, who are Catholics, do not, of course, feel ourselves at liberty to make

¹ See Canon xiii., headed "Due Celebration of Sundays and Holy Days."

² See Heylin's History of the Sabbath, Part II., Chap. vi., Sect. 8. The passage is worth transcribing. In the former part of the chapter he shows that the Reformers did not ground the observance of the Lord's Day on the Fourth Commandment, and that some of them would not even admit the necessity of observing one day in seven. With reference to the two great reformers, Zuinglius and Calvin, he writes:—"Zuinglius, the first reformer of the Switzers, hath resolved it so, in his discourse against one Valentine Gentilis, a new Arian heretic. 'Harken now, Valentine, by what ways and means the Sabbath may be made a ceremony, if either we observe that

any such change as this. We find the first day observed as a sacred festival in our own Church ; on inquiry, we are informed that always and everywhere all Catholic Christians have been accustomed to keep the first day as their great

day which the Jews once did, or think the Lord's Day so affixed unto any time, that we conceive it an impiety it should be changed into another ; on which, as well as upon that, we may not rest from labour, and harken unto the word of God, if, perhaps, such necessity should be : this would, indeed, make it become a ceremony.' Nothing can be more plain than this. Yet Calvin is as plain when he professeth that he regarded not so much the number of *seven*, as to enthrall the Church unto it. Sure I am Doctor Prideaux reckoneth him as one of them who teach us that the Church hath power to change the day, and to transfer it to some other : and that *John Barclaie* makes report how once he had a consultation, of altering the Lord's Day unto the Thursday. Bucer affirms as much, as touching the authority, and so doth Bullinger and Brentius, Ursine and Chemnitius, as Doctor Prideaux hath observed. Of Bullinger, Bucer, Brentius, I have nought to say, because the places are not cited ; but take it, as I think I may, upon his credit. But for Chemnitius he saith often that it is a voluntary observation ; that it is an especial part of our Christian liberty not to be tied to days and times, in matters which concern God's service ; and that the Apostles made it manifest by their example, that every day, or any day, may by the Church be set apart for religious exercises. And as for Ursine, he makes this difference between the Lord's Day and the Sabbath, that it was utterly unlawful to the Jews either to neglect or change the Sabbath without express commandment from God Himself, as being a ceremonial part of Divine worship ; but for the Christian Church, that may design the first or second, or any other day, to God's public service. To these add Dietericus, a Lutheran divine, who, though he makes the keeping of one day in seven to be the *moral* part of the Fourth Commandment, yet for that day it may be Sunday, or Saturday, or any other, be it one in seven. And so Hospinian is persuaded, that if the oc-

weekly festival. We find allusion to this fact in the writings of the very earliest Fathers; by some of whom, and among them by St. Ignatius, the disciple of St. John, it is called the LORD'S Day¹. From the use of this expression by Ignatius we may fairly conclude that it is to the Sunday festival that St. John himself referred when he says, "I was in the spirit on the LORD'S day"²; although this is not an undisputed fact, some persons supposing that he alludes to Easter-day. We find that the Apostles very frequently, if not ordinarily, held religious assemblies on this day, though not on this day only: and it is a day to be honoured as that on which our LORD rose again from the dead. The tradition of the Church attributes its first appointment to the Apostles, and though nothing is said of that appointment in the Bible, yet the practice of the Apostles seems to countenance the tradition. Hence our conclusion is this: the law of the

casions of the Church do so require, the LORD'S Day may be changed unto any other, provided it be *one of seven*; and that the change be so transacted that it produce no scandal or confusion in the Church of GOD. Nay, by the doctrine of the Helvetian Churches, if I conceive their meaning rightly, every particular Church may destinate what day they please to religious meetings; and every day may be a LORD'S Day, or a Sabbath."

¹ Ep. to the Magnesians.

² Rev. i. 10.

Jewish Sabbath having been repealed, the Apostles and primitive Christians, the early Church, to prevent our liberty from becoming licentious, among other festivals appointed the weekly festival of the LORD'S day, which is to us what the seventh day was to the Jews, a day of rest, and so *a* Sabbath-day, though not, in strictness of speech, *the* Sabbath-day, the day mentioned in the Commandment. To call it *the* Sabbath-day, for reasons I have before mentioned, seems scarcely correct, since by doing so we lead men to a wrong conclusion. But we may speak of it as *a* Sabbath-day, or as *the Christian* Sabbath. As a high and holy festival, its observance is certainly Apostolical; and, having been adopted by the universal consent of the universal Church, it is an unalterable festival. The Apostles and early Christians could have had no authority to make a change in any of the Commandments of GOD without an express revelation and declaration on the subject; of which, in this instance, there is no record in Scripture. But GOD having abrogated this Commandment, they, acting in the spirit of the Commandment, had authority from GOD to bind us to the observance of this and of other festivals to celebrate the mercies of Redeeming love.

No sooner was the State brought into alliance with the Church, than the State evinced its Christian zeal by its civil enactments with respect to the observance of the LORD'S DAY. By Constantine the Great and Theodosius, laws to this effect were propounded. And in our own country Athelstan and Edgar, in the tenth century, and afterwards King Henry the Sixth, legislated on the subject, and forbad their subjects to traffic on this day: while the statutes of Charles the Second are still in force to aid the Church in this sacred observance.

And in our mode of observing this day we shall do well to take for our guidance the existing customs of our Church, as well as the laws of our country. It is observed more strictly now than in the time of our Reformers¹; more strictly in

¹ "The Puritans, having miscarried in their open attacks upon the Church, endeavoured to carry on their designs more under covert. Their magnifying the Sabbath-day, as they call Sunday, was a serviceable expedient for this purpose. Preaching the strict observance of this Festival had a strong colour of zeal, and gained them the character of persons particularly concerned for the honour of God ALMIGHTY. To what degrees of rigour this doctrine was strained the reader may see by some of the assertions in Dr. Bound's Book of the Sabbath, printed this year. This divine maintains, 1st, That the command of sanctifying every seventh day, in the Mosaic Decalogue, is moral and perpetual. 2dly, That whereas all other parts in the Jewish economy were to cease under Christianity, this of the Sabbath was only to change the day, but to remain unaltered in other circumstances. 3rdly, That the rest upon this

England than in foreign countries. But neither the example of our Reformers nor that of our brethren in other lands can be obligatory upon us. The Reformers, living in an age less enlightened than our own, were not blessed with all the

day must be particular and distinguished, and quite different from the customary usage. He defines the manner of this rest by affirming, 4thly, That scholars must not study the creditable sciences, nor lawyers entertain clients nor peruse evidences; serjeants, apparitors, and summoners must be prohibited executing their respective offices; justices of peace are not to take examinations, nor act upon that day. To ring more bells than one is pronounced unlawful. No public entertainments or wedding-dinners are to be made. Under this instance of restraint there was an odd reserve of liberty for lords, knights, and gentlemen of fashion; but which way this ceremony could consist with Bound's principles is difficult to imagine. And, lastly, all diversions lawful upon other days were to be forborne; and no person was to discourse of recreations, news, or business. This doctrine, being singular in strictness, and those who recommended it persons of unexceptionable behaviour, grew very popular, and great numbers were proselyted to it. The learned, notwithstanding, were divided in their opinion. Some looked on this doctrine as agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, and a seasonable revival of ancient truth. Others believed Bound built upon a weak foundation, and that, though his inferences might be right, his principles were wrong. However, since they tended to the advancement of piety, *they thought it more serviceable to let the mistake pass upon the people.* Others looked farther, and censured these assertions as a restraint of Christian liberty, and throwing us back to the Mosaic dispensation. Besides, 'twas reasonably suspected, Bound could have no friendly design in this performance. 'Tis plain he struck at ancient usage and the authority of the Church, and that, by appearing so strongly for the strict observation of the Lord's Day, his intention was to put down the other festivals. That he wrote upon this view is pretty evident by his affirming that he sees not where the Lord has given any authority

information and experience which are possessed by us ; and in foreign lands either the circumstances are different, or the result such as to warn us against an imitation of the conduct of those who dwell therein.

In Protestant States where those public amusements are sanctioned which we prohibit, there is a coldness and deadness in religion, a prevailing

to his Church ordinarily and perpetually to sanctify any day, excepting that which he hath sanctified HIMSELF ; and, farther, he urges it as a proof of degeneracy and innovation in the Church of Rome that they had raised several days to an equality of regard with the seventh ; that their religious offices were as solemn, and their prohibitions of working as peremptory, for holidays as Sundays. Besides, the Dissenters might have a farther reaching in pressing these Sabbatarian rigours ; and that, by gaining the people to this new doctrine, they might improve their interest, and recover some part of the ground they lost in the miscarriage of their discipline. It seems some of the party ran the doctrine to a scandalous extremity, and delivered frightful paradoxes in the pulpit. They were so hardy as to say that to do any servile work or business on the LORD's Day was as great a sin as to kill a man or commit adultery. In Somersetshire, that to throw a bowl on the LORD's Day was as great a sin as to kill a man. In Norfolk, that to make a feast, or dress a wedding-dinner on the same, was as great a sin as for a father to take a knife and cut his child's throat. And in Suffolk, that to ring more bells than one on the LORD's Day was as great a sin as to commit a murder. Upon these excesses a complaint was preferred against some of the preachers, and their books ordered to be delivered to the Bishops and Magistracy by Whitgift and the Chief Justice Popham. But, notwithstanding this care in the Government, the doctrine spread, and catch'd upon the people. The Nonconformists were not wanting in their endeavours ; for in most of their books they made it their business to reinforce the subject, and press the practice."—*Collier's Eccles. Hist. Vol. ii. p. 643.*

Rationalism and Socinianism, which every earnest-minded Christian must view with the deepest regret.

If in Catholic countries upon the Continent, in spite of the superstitions of foreign Catholics much to be lamented, there be more warmth, and if it be said that, although public amusements are encouraged in the evening, the churches are crowded in the morning, still we are to remember that in those countries every Friday is, by devout persons, as religiously observed as the Sunday; and until the Catholics of England, the members of the English Church, do likewise, we must protest against any relaxation of the laws which enforce the strict observance of the LORD'S DAY, even though that day in England appear to foreigners more like a fast than a festival, more like a Jewish Sabbath than a Christian holy-day. In an age when men are more ready to calculate at how small a cost they can serve GOD, than to ascertain how much HE will vouchsafe to accept at our hands—in this busy country, it is something to secure one day in the week to be a day of rest to our overworked population, and for holding immediate communion with our GOD. We must not yield what we possess until we have secured an equivalent.

Rather let us rejoice in the blessing that, while other festivals are despised, this at least, within the Church and without, is so generally observed. It seems almost prophetic that the day should have been in former times dedicated to the sun, since on this day the SUN of Righteousness dispelled the clouds of hellish darkness by rising from the grave. With our risen SAVIOUR let us, my brethren, keep the LORD'S Day by the elevation of our souls, and by setting our affections there, where, and where only, true joys are to be found. Justified by faith, softened by repentance, prepared for our high office by private prayer, let us exercise, with boldness and with gladness, our Christian privileges : as a holy generation, a peculiar people redeemed by the Blood of CHRIST, let us enter the Palace of the KING of Kings, to do our homage to HIM who is our SOVEREIGN as well as our FATHER : a Royal Priesthood, let us approach the Courts of the LORD'S House to offer, in the best mode our means will admit, the sacrifice we are permitted to offer, the sacrifice of prayer and praise : members of one Body, even, the Body of CHRIST, let us seek the Blessing of GOD, through the appointed means, upon that Body and upon every member of the same : let us realize, through the sanctifying SPIRIT, the

Communion of Saints, while united to CHRIST, our SAVIOUR, through the blessed Eucharist, we are by HIM united with GOD.

Let us avoid all acts and thoughts that may distract our attention from the things unseen and eternal ; and let our love to our GOD overflow in beneficence to our fellow-creatures, that men, seeing our good works, may understand that our's is a religion of faith, and hope, and charity, of love, and peace, and joy. Let us dedicate to the LORD the LORD'S Day, and the happiness which shall result from so doing will not be earthly and temporal ; it will bear the stamp of Heaven, and abide for ever !

SERMON XI.

MODERATION OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

PROVERBS IV. 25—27.

“Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left : remove thy foot from evil.”

THESE words may with great propriety be addressed, as an exhortation, to the members of the Church of England. Ever since the Reformation it has been the glory of the English branch of the Catholic Church that she has stood, unmoved, in the centre between two vicious extremes : the extreme, on the one hand, of Catholicism, which is Popery,

and the extreme of Protestantism, on the other hand, which we will speak of as Ultra-Protestantism¹.

This is the Providential position of our Church ; and it is necessary, very frequently, to remind the members of the English Church that such is the case, because such a situation, although in some respects advantageous, is by no means a satisfactory one². It is unpleasant to be so placed as to be exposed to a constant fire from either side.

¹ It has been the wisdom of the Church of England, ever since the first compiling of her public Liturgy, to keep the mean between the two extremes."—*Preface to Book of Common Prayer*.

² " 'Tis a hard condition," says Archbishop Laud, " The Church of England professeth the ancient Catholic faith, and yet the Romanist condemns her of novelty in her doctrine ; she practiseth Church Government as it hath been in use in all ages and places where the Church of Christ hath taken any rooting both in and ever since the Apostles' times, and yet the Separatist condemns her for Anti-Christianism for her discipline. The plain truth is, she is between these two factions as between two millstones ; ***** and it is very remarkable that, while both these press hard upon the Church of England, both of them cry out upon persecution." *Laud against Fisher, Pref.* Dr. Hammond, in his *Preface to the View of the Directory*, makes a similar remark, and says that the Church has ever been opposed by " Persecutors on both extreme parts : the assertors of Papacy on the one side, and the Consistory on the other ; the one accusing it of schism, the other of compliance ; the one of departing from the Church of Rome, the other of remaining with it. Like the poor Greek Church, our fellow-martyr, devoured by the Turk for too much Christian profession, and damned by the Pope for too little, it being the dictate of natural reason in Aristotle, that the middle virtue is infallibly known by this, that it is accused of either extreme as guilty of the other." So was it in the reign of Charles the First, so is it now.

By Protestants we are reviled, because we are not sufficiently Protestant ; by Romanists, because we are not, as *they* think, sufficiently Catholic ; and although this censure of the two extremes be, in fact, a eulogy, still it is natural that there should be a disposition on the part of many to shift their position, and to conciliate either the one side or the other as men happen to be inclined to one or other of the two extremes by which we are opposed. There is a disinclination to look right on, and to let their eyelids look straight before them ; there is a desire to turn either to the right hand or to the left, men being forgetful that on either side there is evil.

I do not attribute this inclination to conciliate those who are in that extreme, which we happen to regard with the greater favor, by making concessions to them either great or small, to any unworthy motive ; although, without doubt, party motives do sometimes operate, and concession is proposed on the one side or on the other, to strengthen our hands, if the opponent in the opposite extreme be unusually powerful ; but I trace it, in men of earnest minds and kind tempers, to the misapplication of one of the most pure, most charitable, most truly Christian aspirations of the human heart. Where, indeed, is the heart renewed by Divine Grace, in which there

does not exist a yearning, a longing after unity and union with all who love the LORD JESUS CHRIST, whether he be Ultra-Protestant or Papist? Who does not look back with admiration to the time when Christian hearts were one, one in feeling, one in principle, one in doctrine, one in discipline, one in brotherly love, one in spirit, all members of one and the self-same body?¹ How it gladdens the heart to read of the friendly intercourse which existed, in early times, between the several branches of the Church; when the Priest of Africa, travelling with commendatory letters from his Bishop, was sure of a brotherly reception in Asia, in Europe, even in Britain itself! When, wherever he went, if not asked to preach, he was honored by being requested to do what was then considered the highest of all earthly honors, to consecrate the Eucharist! How do we dwell upon that active correspondence between Patriarchs and metropolitans, whereby heresy was stifled at its commencement, and the truth as it is in JESUS confirmed, by the testimony and sentence of the universal Church! Among the dearest of our hopes for the Church universal, what hope is more fondly cherished than this, that it may be

¹ Ephes. iv. 4. Col. iii. 15. Romans xii. 5. 1 Cor. xii. 4, 12.

yet again as it was in the beginning; and that God's truth may be established, not, as now, by controversies, painful even when conducted in a Christian spirit, but by the conferences of love!

Alas! when we look upon the existing state of Christendom; when we see the Ultra-Protestant and the Romanist regarding each other as deadly enemies; when we hear the one extreme denouncing those of the other extreme as worse than infidels, and behold both sides having recourse to the artifices of falsehood, thinking that zeal against each other will cover a multitude of sins; when we see them only united in an unholy alliance against the English Church; when we contemplate these circumstances, we must be compelled to admit that the chance of uniting Christendom, under the existing state of affairs, and in the present age, is small indeed. And what ought this to teach us, but that the time ordained by the Providence of God for this blessed consummation has not yet arrived?¹ So evident, indeed, is this, that it has not yet entered into the daydream of the most visionary enthusiast among us to expect an immediate realization of this bright Christian hope. But there are very many who are inclined to argue thus: Since we cannot

¹ Rom. xi. 25. Rev. vii. 9. Luke xxi. 24.

accomplish all that we desire, let us do as much as we can ; let us unite the Church of England with one or other of the extremes to which she is now exposed ; and, although Christendom cannot yet become one, there will be at least some approximation to union ; there will be more of union than there is at present ; we shall not be so completely insulated as we now are.

Of course, as our sympathies are with the one or the other of the two extremes, as we sympathise either with the Protestant extreme or with the Catholic extreme, so will our desire be to form a union with parties and persons on this or that side of us.

But to any such union with persons and parties of either extreme the Church of England presents an insuperable obstacle, from the circumstance of her being in that middle position¹, in which while, in some things, she *accords* with both, in other things she is *opposed* to both.

To any attempt at union with Ultra-Protestants our Prayer Book must ever be an obstruction, from the fact that it is decidedly and unequivocally Catholic. We know that the Protestants on the Continent as well as those who secede from our Church at home, have long been accus-

¹ Phil. iv. 5.

tomed to complain of the un-Protestant character of our Prayer Book. They instance our ceremonies, which, when conscientiously observed, render our places of worship much more like the sanctuaries of the Catholic Church abroad, than like those of the Protestants, which resemble the English meeting-house; our very vestments being not Protestant but Catholic. They refer to our Absolutions, and complain that when an English Priest is directed to say to the penitent, under certain conditions, "I absolve thee from thy sins in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST,"¹ he exercises the same authority, and uses the very same words, as the Priest of the Church of Rome. Nor can there be a doubt of the meaning of these words, since in the form of Ordination, which is also unequivocally Catholic, the English Bishop, like the Romish Bishop, assumes the power of conferring the Holy Ghost on the party ordained, for the very purpose that he may remit sins: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost"; "Whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained"². Ultra-Protestants, again, refer to the office of Baptism, and complain that therein Spiritual Regeneration is identified

¹ Visitation of the Sick.

² John xx. 23. Cf. Matt. xviii. 18; Matt. xvi. 19.

with Baptismal Regeneration ; and they justly complain that the teaching of our Catechism, when it instructs us that the body and blood of CHRIST are *verily and indeed* taken and received by the faithful in the LORD'S Supper¹, is repugnant to their notions of that Sacrament. With other similar complaints against our Prayer Book you must be familiar.

Now, it is in vain to say that the Absolution in the Visitation of the Sick is obsolete ; for whether obsolete or not it forms part of that Prayer Book, to all and everything contained in which every English clergyman gives his unfeigned assent and consent. It is in vain to say that some of our Bishops may explain away the words of the Ordination Service, for the question is not what individual Bishops may think²; the question is not how they may evade the force of words ; but the question is, what does the Prayer Book compel them to say ? and what meaning do the words thus uttered convey to simple-minded persons, who, having no private interest to serve, are unprejudiced judges ? The fact that of our clergy who entertain un-Catholic views of

¹ Church Catechism.

² There have been Arian Bishops in ancient times ; Socinian and Sabellian Bishops in modern times. It is not to their opinions but to their official acts that we defer.

regeneration the majority do not attempt to explain away the words of the Baptismal Service, but, regardless of their vow of conformity, either omit, or, at their own discretion, alter the office, is, of itself, confirmatory of the assertion that in that service Baptismal and Spiritual Regeneration are identified. And even if their Bishops do not visit them for this offence, still Bishops have no power to release men from their vows; and the fact that they do violate their vows rather than use the Service will only be regarded by those Ultra-Protestants who secede from the Church as a proof of the superiority in point of morality of those who secede over those of their brethren who conform. And with reference to the other points the Seceders may fairly say, "If your Prayer Book requires explanations which must appear to every candid mind as evasive, surely, for the sake of union, it were better for you to come over to us than for us to go over to you."

What, then, is proposed by the parties who find in our Prayer Book such an obstacle to union with their fellow-Protestants? They clamour for an alteration in the Prayer Book; they desire to make it more conformable, as they say, to the spirit of Protestantism; in a word, they ask the Church to descend from her central position, and to side with Protestant extreme.

Now there are others in the Church who have regarded these difficulties in a different point of view. They confess and profess that what the Church teaches with respect to Absolution, and Ordination, and the Sacraments, and with reference to the many ceremonies she appoints, is indeed very contrary to what Ultra-Protestants assert to be the fundamental principles of Protestantism. But why are we to take it for granted that Ultra-Protestantism must be right, and the Church wrong? Why should we regard Luther, and Calvin, and their followers, as inspired or infallible men, and undutifully suppose that our Church must be in error wherever it agrees not with them? These persons, like the Bereans¹ of old, have received the doctrine of the Church with readiness of mind, and have searched the Scriptures to see whether the things be not as the Church states them, and they, on Scriptural grounds, come to the conclusion that not the Church but the Ultra-Protestants are in error. Blessed be God, those who thus think are in number greatly increasing; those who not only tolerate but love their Prayer Book; and, from the increase in number and influence of such,

¹ Acts, xvii. 11. Cf. John v. 39. Deut. xi. 18—20. Is. viii. 20.
2 Tim. iii. 15, 17. 2 Peter i. 19, 20.

proposals to reform the Prayer Book on an Ultra-Protestant model are now seldom to be heard. If a reform is mentioned it is rather on the Catholic than on the Protestant system, so that those who of late were zealous in censuring the Prayer Book, and in proposing systems of Church reform, have become alarmed; they see that if they try to grasp at too much they may lose what they even at present possess, and they are now, therefore, among those who are most strenuous for permitting things to remain as they are.

So far this is satisfactory to all who would, with the English Church, remain in the centre, and who have been accustomed to lament the tendency in many of their brethren to the Protestant extreme. But the desire of union still exists: the principle operates, though it is differently applied. Of those who love the Prayer Book for its Catholicism, there are many, ardent in charity but weak in judgment, who regard this fact as calculated to accomplish the wish which predominates in us all. They see that, while we retain our Prayer Book, a union with such Protestants as are not members of the Church is impossible, and they conclude that if a union with the whole of Christendom be impossible, a union with the greater part is more desirable than a union, such as that proposed among Protestants,

which, even if effected, could still leave us a fraction, and but a small fraction of the Christian world. They approach, then, the extreme, opposite to that which we have just been considering. They dwell upon our Catholicism, upon our adhesion to all that the Catholics regarded as absolutely essential in the primitive ages, upon our succession from Augustine, upon our Sacraments and Sacramentals, upon our observance (theoretically at least) of Fast and Festival, upon our Daily Services appointed to be sung as well as said, upon our ceremonies which are not Protestant but Catholic, upon all the various points by which we are to be distinguished from Ultra-Protestants; and they invite the Romanists of England, instead of continuing in schism, to conform to the Anglo-Catholic Church; and the Catholics of the Continent, though under the Roman obedience, to admit us into communion with them, and to hold intercourse with us.

But here, again, the central position of our Church is apparent; and as an obstacle is presented by our Prayer Book to any union with Ultra-Protestants, so, by the Thirty-nine Articles, an obstacle is equally presented to our union with those who adhere to the Tridentine Council and admit the supremacy of the Pope. How can there be union with Rome, while Rome remains

as she is, and we protest against Purgatory, against Pardons, against the Worshipping and Adoration as well of Images as of Reliques, and also against Invocation of Saints¹; when, while we maintain the doctrine of the Real Presence against Ultra-Protestants, we, nevertheless, abjure the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and condemn the un-Primitive, un-Catholic, un-Scriptural practice of the Romanists in carrying about, lifting up, and worshipping the Sacrament of the LORD'S Supper²; when we declare that, without faith, the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of CHRIST³ cannot be received; when we insist upon Communion in both kinds⁴; when we assert the liberty of marriage to Bishops, Priests, and Deacons⁵; when we contend for the right of every particular or national Church to ordain, change, and abolish those ceremonies and rites of the Church which have been ordained only by man's authority⁶; when we declare that the Bishop of Rome hath no authority in this realm of England?⁷

Admitting that the Thirty-nine Articles are to be explained by the Prayer Book, and that wherever, by comparing them with the Prayer

¹ Article xxii.² Article xxviii.³ Article xxix.⁴ Article xxx.⁵ Article xxxii.⁶ Article xxxiv.⁷ Article xxxvii.

Book, we find the meaning doubtful, we may interpret them in the Catholic sense, still no honest man can deny that they do condemn, that they are intended to condemn, that they are subscribed *because* they condemn, some of the distinguishing doctrines of Romish theology, and that, while they exist as a formulary of our Church, there can be no peace with Rome.

In order to conciliate Romanists is it proposed to act as those members of our Church, who incline to the Protestant extreme, would wish to act by the Prayer Book—is it proposed to alter or to omit the Articles? Why should we do this? Why are we to presume that Rome is right and that England is wrong? Rather, in this instance, as in the other, let us at least presume that our own Church is right, and let us be as resolutely opposed to Romish superstitions as we are to Ultra-Protestant errors.

But, then, is Christendom always to be divided? We hope not. We believe not. We expect the day when "The LORD shall be King of all the earth; in that day shall there be one LORD, and HIS name ONE"¹. But our business is not, by the decrees of human wisdom, to accelerate a re-union; but to us, occupying the place which PROVIDENCE

¹ Zechariah xiv. 8—12. Cf. Daniel ii. 44.

has allotted to us, "in quietness and confidence shall be our strength"¹. We are cast on troublous times. The mighty River which majestically flowed in one channel at the beginning is now divided into separate streams, although it is to be again united before it reach the ocean of eternity. As a River so divided, the Church is one in its origin and source, one in the succession of its streams of grace; but the unity in which its magnificence once consisted is no longer apparent. It is vain to hope that unity will be promoted by our permitting our own sweet waters to mingle with the muddy stream of humanly-invented canals; not less vain to think that the object will be furthered by our passing over to a channel more wide than our own, though the waters thereof be more polluted. We may lament that the Heavens are not so brightly reflected upon the divided channels as upon the wide expanse of waters when they flowed in one united current; but the fact continues to be a fact, however we may regret it; and if we may be permitted to enlarge our channel, and purify our stream, and strengthen our banks, by reference to the mighty river in its primitive glory, still our obvious duty is not to desert our Providential

¹ Isaiah xxx. 15.

course ; and we may in humility rejoice to see our own stream run brighter, and purer, and deeper than all the other streams of the one Divine River, while “on the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fail, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed”¹.

And who knows but that this very circumstance of our being in a central position, with a Catholic Ritual and Protestant Articles, difficult, it may be sometimes, to be reconciled, but always opposed to either extreme ; who knows but this may be among the means through which the great HEAD of the Church designs to operate when HE shall determine to make us one ? At all events, it is most clearly our duty, as members of the English Church, to endeavour to act on her principles, and, in her spirit, to carry out her intentions.

The Church, by her Ritual, preaches Catholicism to Protestants ; by her Articles she protests against Popery to Catholics ; in her Prayer Book she has something in common with other Catholics ; in her Articles she has something in common with other Protestants ; she would Catholicise Protestants ; she would reform Catholics.

¹ Ezek. xlvii. 12.

Instead of being ashamed of this our Providential position, when we are attacked by Ultra-Protestants for not going far enough in the work of Reformation, or when we are attacked by Papists for having gone too far, let us, on the contrary, consider the censure of the extremes to be, as it is, in truth, our highest eulogy. And when Continental Catholics, now more or less in error, shall perceive that a Church can be reformed without ceasing to be a Church; that medieval innovations may be renounced without a deviation from primitive practice; when they perceive that our public Services in Church, if performed as the Prayer Book directs, are performed with that ceremony and grandeur which become the Spouse of CHRIST when approaching the KING of Kings; when they recognize in our formularies all the essentials of primitive Doctrine; they will be better prepared to hear us, when we remonstrate with them on their errors on the subject of Justification and Supererogatory Works, on their Purgatory and their Pardons, their Image-Worship, and their Adoration of Saints. They will see us to be, what we are in fact, one Church with them; and they will cease to invite us, for the sake of unity, to follow them into error; but they will, on the contrary, take us for the model of a Reformation. This, by the blessing of God,

may be one effect of the Catholicism of our Ritual: while, by endeavouring to carry out the Catholic spirit of our Prayer Book, we shall ourselves be more imbued with Catholic feeling, and be prepared to view with compassion and sympathy, rather than with anger, our brother Catholics abroad, who are still enslaved to Rome and to the abuses which degenerate Rome encourages.

Meantime, the Ultra-Protestants, who, from their horror of the opposite extreme, scarcely regard as Christians their brethren of Rome, seeing that we are prepared, in our opposition to Rome, to unite with them in protesting against those un-Scriptural abuses to which I have more than once alluded, while we still resolutely maintain much in common with Rome itself, may be induced to reconsider the points of difference between themselves and us, and gradually assume a more Catholic character; thus both extremes, by approaching the middle point, will draw nigh to each other, and be prepared for union when the time of union shall have come.

Perhaps, to some of us it may seem that there are symptoms of such an approximation even now existing around us. Certain it is, that Papists themselves are beginning to admit what it has long been their policy not to concede, that there is a marked difference between the Church of

England and the Protestant communities by which we are surrounded ; and when once, from the example which we exhibit, they discover the fact that a renunciation of the errors of Popery does not of necessity involve a desertion of the truths of Catholicism, we may expect to witness the gradual working of a reform among Romanists, which, if not precisely like our own Reformation, in point of detail, may be identical with it in spirit. And certain also it is that, while many Protestant seceders from the Church in this country are gradually adopting practices and opinions to which their ancestors were resolutely opposed, a spirit of inquiry is excited among Protestants in foreign lands ; and many who, for a while, reviled us for not being sufficiently Protestant, approach us now with respect, to ascertain the working of our system, and to master the principles on which we act. The Church of England may have been destined to great things, if only her children will wait for God's time¹ ; if they will remember that his ways are slower than our ways ; if they will leave events to Him, and be themselves employed in the humble discharge of the duties which their hand findeth to do² ; if

¹ Isaiah xxx. 18.

² Eccles. ix. 10.

they will let their moderation be known unto all men¹; if, while seeking the blessing of peacemakers², they will at the same time be sober³; if, zealous for the Glory of God, they will at the same time let their eyes look straight on, and their eyelids look straight before them; if they will ponder the path of their feet, and turn neither to the right hand nor yet to the left.

¹ Phil. iv. 5.

² Mat. v. 9.

³ 1 Pet. v. 8.

SERMON XII.

THE SONG OF THE ANGELS.

LUKE II. 14.

*“Glory to GOD in the highest, and on earth peace, good will
towards men.”*

SUCH was the song of Angels, expressive of their feelings when they beheld the LORD of Glory assuming the nature of man; and to the consideration of this seraphic song I invite you, humbly hoping that, by the Grace of GOD, we may, from such consideration, imbibe some portion of the angelic spirit and principle¹, while we forget not that, so far as we are among the Saints, we have mystical communion with the Angels themselves².

¹ See Collect for St. Michael and all Angels.

² Heb. i. 14.

Our subject naturally divides itself into two parts. The Angels contemplated the Glory of God, and they rejoiced also in the effect of that Glory in producing Peace upon earth and good will towards men.

When man looks abroad upon creation ; when, from the contemplation of this earth we tread on, he passes to the view of those planets which revolve, in our company, around our central sun ; when passing the limits of our solar system and looking to the firmament he remembers that the worlds piled upon worlds which he there beholds are but parts of a stupendous whole ; when he reflects upon mind itself, its capabilities and its powers, as we perceive them in man, as we can imagine them in the higher intelligences, in whom they are not depressed by those hindrances which chain down to earth a creature whose mind, whatever its remaining vigor, is but a ruin ; I say, when man looks abroad upon universal creation, the universe of created matter, and the universe of created spirit, he is tempted to ask why, for what end, purpose, object, were all these wondrous works commanded into existence ? And the mind of man can devise one answer, and one only, and that answer is, that all things, from the insect scarce breathing on the imperceptible atom, to the seraph all glowing with love Divine, all,

all were created for the glory of the CREATOR. And the surmises of reason are fully confirmed by the assurance of Revelation, which declares that “the LORD hath made *all* things for HIMSELF, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil”¹.

Now, sanctity consists in the identification of the will of the creature with that of the CREATOR, and the Holy Angels, therefore, are one with GOD, in seeking to promote HIS Glory, and in rejoicing at every fresh manifestation thereof. They *see*, what with us is an object not of sight but of faith, how the glory, the happiness, the perfection of universal creation is involved in the Glory of the CREATOR.

They proclaimed, then, Glory to GOD in the highest, when Mary brought forth her first-born SON, and wrapped HIM in swaddling clothes, and laid HIM in a manger², because they perceived how by that event peace was brought to earth and good will manifested towards men.

But here we must pause to reflect on what is meant by the peace and good will which are thus mentioned, and which are thus conducive to the Glory of GOD.

¹ Prov. xvi. 4.

² Luke ii. 7.

Instead of looking to GOD and HIS Glory, we are too apt to think only of man in his impotence; and then, when we think of peace in this sense, we find that it has *not* resulted from the propagation of Christianity; on the contrary, we are reminded of our LORD's warning words: "Think not that I am come to send peace upon earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword"¹. HE came to declare the truth, and the truth is a "two-edged sword"²; and the declaration of the truth is like the wielding of a sword; some it must cut down, and those it wounds will turn to strike again. To preach the Gospel is to declare the truth of GOD; to declare the truth of GOD is to make known the Divine will: but man's heart, we know, is desperately wicked³; and in what does wickedness consist? in what but in *opposition* to the Divine will? To GOD's truth, then, man is naturally opposed; not to *every* portion of it taken by itself, but to HIS truth as a whole, and consequently to *some* portions of it; to all *that* portion which happens to run counter at the present time to his passions, his indolence, or his selfishness. Cast GOD's truth, then, upon the corrupt hearts of men, and it is like applying alkali

¹ Matt. x. 34.

² Heb. iv. 12.

³ Jer. xvii. 9.

to an acid ; all will at first be commotion, and if it afterwards subside, yet as soon as some fresh portion of the truth is brought forward, the same commotion will be again excited. The Apostles, obedient to their mission, went to preach the Gospel to the Pharisees¹ ; that is to say, to those who were regarded by their countrymen as the saints of the earth², men who stood apart from their brethren, as considering themselves too holy to unite with the majority of Israel. The Pharisees had a portion of the truth ; they had been accustomed to it ; they had so handled it as to make it accordant with their passions and their selfishness. They believed GOD when HE promised the MESSIAH. The Apostles declared that in JESUS of Nazareth the very MESSIAH they sought was to be found : this would imply that these persons, the leaders of the chiefest sect among the Hebrews, had been in error ; it was contrary to the will of these self-righteous ones, to acknowledge the crucified JESUS as their promised KING ; they were opposed to the truth as thus brought before them ; they would not examine, they would not inquire, they would not investigate ; they suborned false witnesses³ ; they spread abroad lying

¹ Luke xxiv. 47.

² Acts xxvi. 5. Phil. iii. 5.

³ Matt. xxvi. 59.

reports¹; the whole religious world was in commotion, and the poor Christians found not peace but a sword to be the consequence of their declaring the most important truth which was ever revealed.

Again, the Apostles went to the heathen. The heathen had some portion of the truth; they believed that worship was due to a BEING higher than man. The Apostles told them of the unknown God, who is the only God; but this implied that the gods they had hitherto worshipped were “no gods”²; it implied a censure upon all the established religions of the world, upon every existing national religion, except that of the Jews; it implied that their Aristotles, and their Platos, and their Ciceros, even Socrates himself, their saints, their almost worshipped preachers and authors, had all been in error; and the Apostles, instead of promoting peace, had themselves to endure trial of cruel mockings and scourgings³, yea, moreover, bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, slain with the sword, destitute, afflicted, tormented⁴.

To pass over the intervening times, at the Reformation, the Reformers, following the Apostles, pointed out the errors which had crept into the

¹ Matt. xxvi. 60, 61.

² Acts xix. 26.

³ Matt. xxiii. 34.

⁴ Acts vii. 58; xiv. 19. Heb. xi. 37.

Church of England, by reminding men of truths which had been long forgotten; and those members of our Church who were bigoted to the Romish corruptions became intolerant as the Pharisee, fierce as the heathen of old; and the members of our Church, who, on the other hand, wished to re-assert therein the whole truth as it is in JESUS¹, were subjected to the tortures which the Apostles had undergone before, and bore them with Apostolic fortitude, because supported by the same Grace, which is ever vouchsafed in proportion to our wants². Again, when, the partizans of the Reformation having themselves forgotten or slighted, by carrying out their principles to an extreme, much of GOD's truth, that truth was re-asserted and vindicated by the divines of the seventeenth century; the parties condemned by the truth thus vindicated did not inquire, did not examine, did not investigate, but, by the paricide of their Primate, and the martyrdom of their Sovereign, convinced the messengers of the truth that the result of its propagation was not peace, but a sword. It seems, indeed, that thus one truth after another is to be gradually established. At first it is bitterly opposed, then it is tacitly acquiesced in; and fresh opposition

¹ Eph. iv. 21.² Deut. xxxiii. 25.

is exerted by the exhibition of some other forgotten or slighted portion of the truth once, and once for all, delivered to the Saints¹.

From the nature of things, from the fact of the corruption of our nature, from that "infection of nature which doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated"², if the preaching of the Gospel be the propagation of GOD'S truth, that preaching will be opposed, and, being opposed, must be the cause of dissension. Truth has reference not to man's opinions, but to facts; it is independent of men's minds; and, consequently, until all shall be brought to recognize the one truth, of which all subordinate truths are part, union cannot be promoted by its propagation.

The Angels, then, clearly did not raise their song of joy because peace in *this* sense was to be established upon earth; for they must have foreseen, as clearly as we can, that peace, in this sense of the word, the Gospel would not establish before our LORD'S second coming. Indeed, persecution, not peace, is to be the portion of the Church, until the second coming of her SPOUSE in all HIS Glory, to the final overthrow of her persecutor. It is *one* of the signs, not a *certain* sign, but *a* sign of our having the truth that we

¹ Jude iii.

² Art. ix.

are persecuted and hated by the world. When the Church, or any branch of it, is *not* persecuted, that branch of the Church is in danger; just as the prosperous man is in danger; just as it is so peculiarly difficult for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Neither can the peace announced to be effected by our LORD'S Incarnation be that inward comfort and satisfaction, that assurance, that peace of mind, on which some persons are apt to set too great a store. For of that inward satisfaction, (the result, very often, of enthusiasm and mere emotion); of that peace of mind, (the result, very often, of a deadness of conscience), some of the holiest of the Saints have been deprived: to be deprived of it seems to have been a part of their earthly trial. This kind of peace our blessed SAVIOUR had not when HE was agonized in the garden; HIS agony, indeed, seems to have consisted, in part, of the withdrawal of this kind of comfort—a comfort which some *do* experience, and which, as I shall presently show, *may* be a blessing vouchsafed by the HOLY GHOST the COMFORTER to a Saint of GOD, but which is not of necessity so.

If, then, it was not in this sense that the Angels spake of peace, what *was* their meaning?

Their adoring thoughts were, as we have seen before, directed to GOD and the contemplation of GOD'S Glory. And when they looked from GOD to the works of GOD, what did they behold? They saw all things and beings; they saw all things animate and inanimate, in all the universe, conducing to the Glory of GOD, and having in that Glory their perfection and their happiness; all but the things and beings of hell and of earth. And in hell and on earth they saw, and marvellous must the sight have been, rebellion raging against GOD Most High. The Prince of Hell, the great apostate spirit, "whose name is, in the Hebrew tongue, Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon, the Destroyer"¹, Satan, is waging war against the ALMIGHTY GOD. Hence it is that the designs of GOD are so often frustrated for a time: there is a mighty spirit, a person all *but* almighty fighting against GOD: the Almightyness of GOD has not yet been put forth to conquer him: the fight is still going on: we are standing, as it were, on the field of battle: the victory will not be won until MESSIAH, our KING, shall have come again KING of Kings and LORD of Lords, finally to destroy that evil one, who, as Anti-Christ, before his destruction, will,

¹ Rev. ix. 11.

we are forewarned, exert such powers as to seem almost to have prevailed, having all *but* destroyed the universal Church ; so that on earth, through the workings of Anti-Christ, faith will scarcely be found, when suddenly the LORD of Glory will appear to claim his spouse sitting as a lone woman in the wilderness. Of this earth, as well as of hell, this accursed arch-rebel hath obtained possession. He is, as Scripture teaches us, the prince of this world ; and he claims the fallen sons of Adam as his slaves, his fellow-soldiers, who, by nature, work with him and are led by him, and are consequently, equally with him, at war with the Most High God. Why this should be, why this spirit of evil hath not been yet annihilated, we know not ; perhaps no created spirit doth know ; we only *do* know that GOD is a GOD of means, and therefore it is according to the analogy of his other dealings with his creatures to use means for the destruction of this arch-enemy and his allies ; and the use of means implies the passing of time ; and in GOD's sight a thousand years are but as one day ; and, therefore, there may be no real slackness, though there be what may *appear* slackness to us. We do know that when the end shall have come ; that when our LORD, perfect man and perfect GOD, shall have come again to the earth, and the final battle shall

have been fought; when “the great voice out of the Temple of Heaven, from the Throne, shall have said, It is done!”¹—we do know that then we shall see how all has tended to the Glory of God, the promotion of which is the end of our existence.

This, then, is what the Angels saw. They looked down upon the earth, and they saw there the encampments of the evil spirits, of Satan and his host, visible to them, though to mortal eyes invisible. At the same time they beheld the sons of Adam, enslaved to these spirits of darkness, poor, maimed, halt, blind, hewers of stone and drawers of water²; carnal, sold under sin³, that which they did allowing not, for what they would that they did not, but what they hated that they did⁴. Perhaps they may have marvelled how this comported with the Glory of God. But when they saw the Second PERSON in the ONE GOD-HEAD, when they beheld the WORD, which was with GOD and which was God⁵, made flesh, and dwelling among men⁶, when they beheld the two natures, the Divine and the human, united in one Person, that peace might be effected, not

¹ Rev. xvi. 17.² Josh. ix. 21.³ Rom. vii. 14.⁴ Rom. vii. 25. Gal. v. 17.⁵ John i. 1.⁶ John i. 14.

between God and the Satanic host, (they are past redemption,) but between God and the poor human slaves whom Satan was bending and binding to his will, they did indeed raise their song of praise, and sing to the Glory of God in the Highest. His Glory it was, instead of destroying the children of men, rebels though they were, to establish peace upon earth ; not, indeed, between those who have the SON and those who have not the SON of GOD¹, but peace through CHRIST between man and his offended Maker ; they glorified God while they beheld good will evinced by the All-Holy CREATOR towards a sinful, lost, perishing creature, a circumstance to angelic intelligences marvellous beyond conception.

We, in the deep corruption of our nature, can never excite in ourselves a sufficient horror of unholiness—unholiness, which is any, even the slightest, deviation from Divine rectitude². It is only as we ourselves, by the sanctifying influences of the HOLY GHOST upon our souls, advance in holiness, that we begin to think of this. And it is because of their increasing horror of unholiness, of the slightest deviation from Divine rectitude, that men become more ascetic as they become more holy. Men are at first content if they act

¹ Cf. Sermon iv.

² James ii. 10.

up to the conventional morals of their country, the law of honesty and of honour. The moral code is stricter for those who would appear to be religious, while those who become really religious become stricter still. Not only do they abstain from all transgressions of the moral law, but by them the Church's law is regarded as sacred ; and beyond this their very infirmities, their negligences, their ignorances are subjects of horror to them, and causes of mortification ; and while the detection of their infirmities, together with the conviction of the deadly nature of them, their *tendency* to deadly sin, makes them cling the closer to their only SAVIOUR, and seek more earnestly an interest in HIS merits, as well as in the power of HIS Grace, so the horror of being still subject to such infirmities, the horror of unholiness still attaching to their "holy things"¹, leads them to those fasts, those self-denials, those mortifications, in private, which are to them as the cutting off of a right hand and the plucking out of a right eye when they offend². Men may live in the commission of many sins without compunction of conscience ; just as, by shutting his eyes, a man may, without inconvenience, walk through a cloud of dust ; but the more we are under Grace, the more tender

¹ Lev. v. 15. Ezek. xx. 40.² Matt. v. 29.

our conscience becomes ; and thus, as the smallest particle of dust, when falling upon the ball of the eye, inflicts pain the most acute, so to the spiritual conscience will the slightest infirmity be affecting. This is the progress of man growing in holiness ; and the deadly nature of even what man calls infirmities is seen more clearly still by the holy Angels. Sin, a rebellion against an All-Merciful MAKER, is so monstrous in their eyes that they could scarcely, until GOD's mercy to man was revealed, believe it possible that an offending creature should not be crushed by the offended CREATOR, as we crush to death the insect that is noisome in our sight. They looked, then, with adoring astonishment on the condescension of GOD Incarnate ; they looked with adoring love on the fact that, consistently with the Holiness of GOD, there could be reconciliation offered, and peace extended, to the human race, a rebel colony ; that there could be good will from GOD to man, the slave of Satan. They were astonished, for they saw a deed done which *created* being could never have accomplished¹ ; they desired to look further into the mystery² ; they saw with wonder GOD Incarnate, in order that there might be peace between Heaven and earth, good will from GOD

¹ Isaiah lxiv. 4.² 1 Pet. i. 2.

to man. With what greater wonder must they have witnessed the fact that before this, the object of his Incarnation, was fully established, this Divine Person was to die; to die that man might live; to die that man might draw nigh to God; to die that it might be possible for God to draw nigh to man, the Holy to dwell in the unholy, without annihilating him¹, and so impart that holiness without which no man can see God²; to die that peace might be established upon earth. They perceived how the mighty scheme, while it manifested the mercy of the one and only God, exhibited the distinct agency of each Person in the Godhead; the FATHER devising, the SON achieving, the HOLY GHOST administering that mystery of mercy; and all, Angels and Arch-Angels, all the Company of Heaven, united to laud and magnify the Holy, Blessed, and Glorious TRINITY, saying HOLY, HOLY, HOLY LORD GOD of HOSTS; Heaven and earth are full of THY Glory; Glory be to THEE, O LORD, Most High!

And now, my brethren, the question to be asked is this, Is the Great God at peace with us? Peace is established between God and man; not between God and *all* men, but between God and

¹ Gen. xxxii. 30. 1 Cor. iii. 16.

² Heb. xii. 14.

certain men, under certain conditions ; and are we among those certain men with whom he is at peace ? Let the answer be given not by a reference to the state of our feelings ; not by saying that we feel comfortable, we feel assured of our salvation : this kind of feeling some of the most profligate of men have experienced : many who have been assured by their feelings of salvation here, will find hereafter, it may be feared, that they woefully deceived themselves ; many, who have counted themselves righteous without doing righteousness. The eye may be blind, and the man, tottering over the precipice, may not see his danger ; *is* he, therefore, not in danger ? A man may be drunk with wine, and be in the highest flow of spirits, reckless of all around, but this is no proof that he is in a healthy state of body : so the conscience may be in a stupor, and refuse to give testimony against sin ; or the fanatic may be mad with excited feelings, but *his* feelings are no proof that his spiritual state is good. We have already seen that the holiest of men may be void of that comfort which results from excited feelings ; and thus excited feelings, assurances, raptures, are no proof of our being under Grace : it is a proof neither the one way nor the other ; neither that we are nor that we are not. But if you really wish to know, my brethren, whether GOD is at

peace with you, remember that peace with God implies hostility to the enemies of God ; hostility to Satan and all the hosts of Satan, and everything belonging to Satan. Being, then, admitted into the Host of the Lord by Holy Baptism ; having the heavenly armoury to resort to for the spiritual weapons of our warfare, for our girdle, and our breastplate, and our greaves, and our shield of faith, and our helmet of salvation, and our sword of the Spirit¹ ; having CHRIST, the Great CAPTAIN of our Salvation², ever at hand, to throw over us His protecting shield ; having the HOLY GHOST to array us in grace, having all these powers, and protections, and privileges, we must inquire whether we are, in real earnest, contending against all that is evil within us and around us ; whether we are zealous in fighting down all that is evil within us ; whether by precept and example we are zealous in bringing all without us and around us to the side of the Lord³. Yes, my brethren, if we be sanctified, if the same mind be in us as is in the holy Angels ; if the same mind be in us as was in CRIST JESUS our LORD⁴ ; our will, purified by the mighty operations of God the Blessed SPIRIT, will be identified with the Divine will ; we shall

¹ Eph. vi. 17.² Heb. ii. 10.³ 1 Cor. ix. 19, 22.⁴ Phil. ii. 5.

be one with GOD in seeking to promote HIS Glory, since in this he permits us—Oh ! condescending mercy !—to be employed¹ ; to promote HIS Glory, in whose Glory the glory, the happiness of universal creation and of ourselves, as part of the creation, is involved.

And is it asked, How we can promote God's Glory ? Remember that, so far as we are concerned, so far as this earth is concerned, the Glory of GOD is promoted, as in various ways, so especially by the Salvation of man ; by bringing men from the army of Satan into the camp of the living God ; and, when they are in HIS camp, by preventing their desertion to the enemy, their treason in the ranks. This is so obviously the case, that, when loyal feelings towards MESSIAH, the KING, are once excited in the breast, there is generally a glowing zeal to this end. But the skilful soldier will not disregard the danger that is near from his desire to storm the citadel that is at a distance : there is *one* man who is always in danger of falling, if we ourselves do not watch him ; that man's salvation is possible through the Atoning Merits of our SAVIOUR, and his election to Grace ; but that man's salvation will not be accomplished

¹ Cf. South's Sermon on the Text, " Can a man be profitable to God ? "

unless he be himself made holy¹; and holy that man may become through the gracious influences of GOD the HOLY GHOST; but the influences of GOD the HOLY GHOST will not be exerted over him, unless, while having recourse to the appointed means of Grace, he does his very best. And to each heavenly pilgrim I say, *Thou* art the man; and in *thee*, thus growing in holiness, GOD is glorified. Yes, each man, as he is endeavouring, by the Grace of CHRIST, to become more and more holy, is doing, in his humble sphere, what CHRIST his SAVIOUR has done on the extended scale, is advancing the Glory of GOD in the Highest. As each sin is renounced, as each virtuous habit is formed, as each infirmity is overcome, as the old man within us is crucified², the sympathising Angels take up their song, though their voices be not heard among us, and ascribe Glory to GOD in the Highest; and, though we see it not, the Glory of GOD is promoted at the same time upon earth. For there *is* an eloquence, my brethren, which, whether employed in the palace or in the cottage, by young or by old, is more persuasive than all the eloquence of all the most eloquent declaimers: it is the eloquence of a good example. As you cannot stir one drop of water without giving

¹ Rom. vi. 19. Heb. xii. 14.

² Rom. vi. 6.

motion to the mass of water surrounding it, so even one good man, moved by the HOLY GHOST, must influence, more or less, all who are even remotely connected with him. By the rhetoric, then, of a good example, let parents preach to their children; while it is the *only* method in which it is lawful for children to preach to their parents. Thus let masters preach to their servants, and servants to their masters; pastors to their flock, and flocks to their pastors; thus let the loving children of our Mother, the Church, preach to the wandering child of error, and, verily, my brethren, you will, in the wisest and the humblest way, promote the Glory of God in the Highest, and you will find—O blessed thought!—you will find, in the last day, hundreds, now unknown to you, blessing God that you lived, since, by your devout example, they were brought to confess that JESUS CHRIST is LORD to the GLORY of GOD the FATHER¹, while by the LORD JESUS CHRIST peace was effected between God and them. Nor will this prevent your having recourse to means more apparently direct for the furtherance of the object you have at heart; for one part of a Christian example is this, that what our hand findeth to do for God's Glory, that we do with all

¹ Phil. ii. 11.

our might¹. And when measures sanctioned by the Church are brought before you, whether it be for erecting, adorning, or enlarging a sanctuary, for establishing or conducting schools, for relieving distress or supporting hospitals, for bringing men through the things which are temporal to the things which are spiritual and eternal, gladly will you assist in their promotion, gladly employ for that purpose your money or your time.

Then, my brethren, when thus habitually acting, when thus persevering in well doing², through the Grace and for the Glory of God, then you may believe that any inward feeling of comfort you may experience, is the gift of the HOLY GHOST. I have said, indeed, that inward peace, the feeling, the assurance of comfort, is *not* a *proof* that the Great God is at peace with us; for this I have known to be the case with some of the most profligate of men; no, *the* proof, the *only* proof, is the fact of our good works; those works which, as far as they are good, are done by the HOLY GHOST, we being his willing agents³: but though a reference to the comfort we have within is no *proof* of our spiritual well-being, yet if, when continuing in the unity of the Church, being one with CHRIST

¹ Eccl. ix. 10.

Acts xiii. 4, 3.

² Phill. ii. 13.

and in CHRIST with God, through faith and through the Eucharist, we allow ourselves in no single sin, but endeavour to keep *all* God's commandments ; if, *then*, we have comfort within, not the *existence* of those feelings, but our works, prove that the feelings are of God, and being of God, we may humbly rejoice in them, and permit them to lead us to greater acts of self-denial for the furtherance of His Glory. The absence of them would *not* prove the absence of our God ; the presence of them would not prove His presence ; but our works, wrought in faith, proving that God is with us, then the comforts within us, we may reasonably conclude, are the consolations of the COMFORTER.

And so, also, with respect to another topic to which I have alluded. I have said that the preaching of the Gospel, being the promulgation of God's truth, to which, in its parts, man, whether partially sanctified or not, is opposed, has a tendency to disturb rather than to pacify the minds of men. But though this be the natural consequence of preaching God's truth in the Devil's world, and among creatures corrupt in heart, still we shall be most like God when HE seeks peace with us, if we seek peace with others, not by the sacrifice of truth, but by the sacrifice of self, and of all the passions connected with self. *Others* may be at

war with *us*, for telling them the truth ; but we must be at peace with them, even as we hope for the peace of God ; and if hereafter they admit the truth, which they may at one time have ridiculed without examining, we must receive them with open arms, for our object is not victory in argument ; our object is to bring all men, altogether, to CHRIST¹, who is our all-in-all², and thus to promote, by the mercy of our SAVIOUR, “Glory to God in the Highest, on earth peace, good will towards men.”

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 5. Col. i. 28

² Col. iii. 11.

SERMON XIII.

JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS.

1 JOHN ii. 1.

"Jesus Christ the Righteous."

I ADDRESS you as a Minister of the LORD JESUS CHRIST; and of JESUS CHRIST the Righteous I propose, with reverence and great humility, to speak. You are aware that there are some persons, heretics, who speak of HIM as if HE were merely a man. That you may be able to refute such persons, I would only exhort you to read the Scriptures attentively. You will there find that if you hold

the Catholic faith, all the facts and doctrines of Scripture, like the two parts of a cloven tally, correspond: while, if you renounce the Catholic faith, the facts of Scripture become a mere mass of inconsistencies.

Let us see how the case stands. Let us consider the facts relating to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Long before HIS birth preparation was made for HIS coming. From the era of Adam's fall, men were taught to expect a DELIVERER¹. HE was expected by the Patriarchs, post-diluvian as well as antediluvian; and as true religion died away, and mankind began to worship wood and stone, the work of men's hands, the expectation was still kept up, by the election, separation, and miraculous preservation of a chosen people, to the father of whose race the promise had been made that in his Seed all the nations of the world should esteem themselves blessed². And among that people the expectation, fostered by types and prophecies, became gradually more vivid, until, at the end of four thousand years, the fulness of the time arrived, and HE who had been promised to Adam, and hoped for by all succeeding fathers, was born into the world.

¹ Gen. iii. 15.

² Gen. xxvi. 4. Acts iii. 25.

And yet, vast as this preparation was; sufficient and more than sufficient to designate a prophet; the conception of the LORD JESUS CHRIST did not take place until the laws of nature had been transgressed, and until miracles had prepared the way before HIM. An Angel announced the approaching birth of ONE who, in order to be HIS harbinger, was to be filled with the HOLY GHOST from his mother's womb, and to turn many of the children of Israel to the LORD their GOD; and the mother of this Child, in order to mark the miraculous interference of the GODHEAD, was a woman well stricken in years¹. Nor was this all. The same angel Gabriel appeared to the "Blessed among women," the Virgin Mary, declaring that the HOLY GHOST should come upon her, and the power of the HIGHEST overshadow her; and that, therefore, the Holy Thing that should be born of her should be called the SON of GOD². And the same Angel appeared yet again to Joseph, unto whom the blessed Virgin was espoused, saying, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the HOLY GHOST: and she shall bring forth a SON, and thou shalt call HIS name JESUS, for HE shall Save HIS people from their

¹ Luke i. 18.² Matt. i. 20.

sins”¹. And when HIS birth had actually taken place, not one Angel only, but a multitude of the heavenly Host, commissioned to announce the event to the Shepherds of Judea who were watching their flocks by night, were heard to praise God and to say, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men”: while “the Glory of the LORD shone round about them”². And when the young CHILD was taken to the Temple to be circumcised, the long-lost spirit of prophecy once more evinced itself in the holy and watchful Simeon and in Anna, the prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel³. And while HE yet lay in the cradle, wise men, princes or sages, came from the East to Jerusalem, led thither by a strange star, (some luminous meteor of a starlike form in our atmosphere, which had an irregular place and an irregular motion, and which moved from place to place until it came to the house where the young Child was,) and they fell down before the Infant and worshipped HIM, and presented unto HIM gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh⁴; that is, they offered to the Child of Mary, who had been born in a manger, such gifts as the

¹ Matt. i. 21.² Luke ii. 9.³ Luke ii. 34, 36.⁴ Matt. ii. 11.

Queen of Sheba had presented to Solomon in his Glory¹. And when a suspicious tyrant issued his edict for the slaughtering of all the children that were in Bethlehem and the coasts thereof, from two years old and under², he was defeated in his purpose, which was the destruction of the Infant JESUS, for the Angel of the LORD had appeared to Joseph in a dream, commanding him to take the young CHILD and HIS Mother, and to flee into Egypt, until the Angel should again bring him word that they might return unto the land of Israel³.

And yet, after all these miracles, with the exception of HIS appearance in the Temple when HE was twelve years old, when "all that heard HIM were astonished at HIS understanding and answers"⁴, HE remained for thirty years retired and unknown⁵; and by this seclusion and retirement of one conscious of such powers, was evinced an almost miraculous degree of humility, certainly a kind of humility of which no other example exists. HE acted not, HE entered not upon HIS Ministry, until HE had received HIS outward commission⁶: hereby exhibiting an example to mankind, and showing that a consciousness of

¹ 2 Chron, ix. 1. ² Matt. ii. 16. ³ Matt. ii. 13. ⁴ Luke ii. 47.

⁵ Luke iii. 21—23. ⁶ Matt. iii. 15—17.

great capacities and powers is not sufficient to constitute a Minister of GOD, until an outward and perceptible commission has been received from on High ; either, as in the case of the LORD JESUS, by the express declaration of GOD¹; or, as in the case of the Jewish Priests, by natural descent ; or, as is the case in the Christian Church, by the imposition of hands by those Bishops who can prove their succession from the Apostles.

But no sooner had the time arrived for the commencement of the Ministry of the LORD JESUS, than Heaven and earth were again in commotion. The voice of John the Baptist, of whom our blessed SAVIOUR HIMSELF has said that he was “ more than a prophet,” and that “ among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist”²; his voice was heard throughout the land, preparing the way before the LORD JESUS. To high and low, to deputations from the chief sects and from the government, to Priests and to Levites, to the soldiers and to the people, he preached repentance because the Kingdom of GOD was at hand, because HE was coming whose shoes John was not worthy to bear, HE who would “ baptize with the HOLY GHOST and with fire.” The whole surrounding

¹ Matt. iii. 16—17.

² Matt. xi. 11.

country was aroused, "and there went out to John Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan." And JESUS HIMSELF came to him, and when HE was baptized, "lo, the Heavens were opened unto HIM, and he saw the SPIRIT of GOD descending like a dove, and lighting upon HIM ; and, lo, a voice from Heaven saying, "This is my beloved SON, in Whom I am well pleased"¹.

HIS Ministry then commenced with a miraculous fast of forty days and forty nights, and, immediately succeeding thereto, with a temptation from the Devil; who seems to have been permitted to assume, in this instance, unusual powers². And then, again, was there a subject for rejoicing, not to men, for they witnessed not the proceedings, but to Angels; Angels, the highest of created intelligences, came and ministered unto JESUS. And then began a career of miracles and mighty works, more in number than we have time to recount. And even if we could recount all those that are recorded, still "there are also many other things which JESUS did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written"³. At HIS Word the blind

¹ St. Matt. iii.² See St. Matt.³ John xxi. 25.

received their sight, the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, the deaf heard, the dead were raised, the devils trembled¹. And all this HE did without reference to any other power, but by HIS own authority: "HE spake and it was done; HE commanded and it stood fast"²; HE said to the stormy winds and waves, "Peace, be still"³, and all was calm; HE said to the dead, "Arise," and the dead arose⁴.

Moreover, HE gave power to others to work miracles in HIS name, to tread on scorpions and serpents, and to lay low all the power of the Enemy⁵. And this, too, was done by ONE who, although HE admitted and avowed that GOD only could forgive sins, yet forgave sins HIMSELF, and and by HIS own authority; who declared HIMSELF to be ONE with the FATHER, and equal with the FATHER⁶; who declared HIMSELF to be Omnipresent⁷; who promised HIS disciples, saying, "I will send the HOLY GHOST the COMFORTER to you," "HE shall receive of MINE and shall show it unto you"⁸. Thus did HE assume to HIMSELF the attributes of JEHOVAH, even while

¹ Matt. xi. 5. James ii. 19.

² Psalm xxxiii. 9.

³ Mark iv. 39.

⁴ Mark v. 41.

⁵ Luke x. 19.

⁶ John xxx. 1.

⁷ Matt. xxviii. 19.

⁸ St. John xv. 26; xvi. 7, 14, 15.

HE pointed to HIMSELF as an example of one who was "meek and lowly in heart"¹; an *apparent* inconsistency, if it had not been that HIS words were confirmed by HIS works; if it were not that, from first to last, the approbation of the FATHER was signified: it was signified at HIS baptism²; it was signified on the Mount of Transfiguration, when Moses and Elias were seen to converse with him, and "a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved SON, in Whom I am well pleased"³; it was signified when the voice was heard again, after HE had entered into Jerusalem to suffer. HIS enemies, astonished and astounded, declared that "never man spake like this man"⁴; and on many occasions HE gave proof that from HIM no secrets were hid, but that HE could discover the mental meditations of those who approached HIM⁵.

And if, as we have seen, all nature was moved at HIS birth, so also was all nature convulsed at HIS death⁶. When agonized in Gethsemane, "there appeared an Angel unto HIM from Heaven strengthening HIM"⁷. And while HE was hanging

¹ St. Matt. xi. 29.

² St. Mark ix. 7. Cf. *Supra*.

³ Matt. xvii. 5.

⁴ John vii. 46.

⁵ John i. 47, 48.

⁶ Luke xxiii. 44—48.

⁷ Luke xxii. 43.

upon the Cross, though the moon was at the full¹, yet “from the sixth hour to the ninth hour there was darkness over all the earth”². And when HE bowed HIS head and gave up the ghost, “the veil of God’s own Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened, and many bodies of the Saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after HIS Resurrection, and went into the Holy City, and appeared unto many”³. And three days after HIS burial, behold, there was again a great earthquake, and the Angels of the LORD again descended, and ministered to HIS Resurrection⁴. And after he had conversed with HIS disciples for forty days, HE was carried up into Heaven, still in the midst of the ministry of attending Angels⁵.

Now this is a plain, simple, unvarnished statement of the history, delivered to us in Scripture, of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Men may deny the authenticity and the genuineness of the Gospel; but if they do not deny this, they must admit these facts. And in reference to these facts, I will only remind you of what has been discovered

¹ Ex. xii. 6; Matt. xxvi. 2.

² Luke xxii. 44.

³ Matt. xxvii. 51—54.

⁴ Matt. xxviii. 2.

⁵ Acts i. 11; St. Mark viii. 38.

to be an invariable law of our Creator, that HE never wastes power ; that there is never any thing done but what is absolutely required for the accomplishment of the end designed ; that the simplest means are ever adopted. And yet what a wondrous tissue of miracles is here ! Heaven and earth, things animate and inanimate, Angels, principalities, powers, all combine to do honor to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. And is it likely, is it probable, that all this would have taken place had HE been a mere man such as we are ? Would such a complication of miracles have been requisite to attest the mission of a mere prophet ? Was a preparation of four thousand years necessary, was a harbinger born out of the ordinary course of nature required, to prepare the way before Moses ? To bring him into the world did a virgin conceive and bear a son ? When he died, was all nature convulsed ? nay, did he not die before his time for doing that *once* which the LORD JESUS did *always*, for working a miracle in his own name, and as if by his own authority ?¹ Were the miraculous ministry of Angels, the opening of the Heavens, the visible descent of the HOLY GHOST, needful to bear witness to Samuel, Elijah, or Elisha ?

¹ Numbers xx. 10—12.

I do not wish to push this argument too far. I do not wish to make it stand for more than it is worth. But it is, to say the least of it, very improbable that this succession of miracles from the cradle to the grave, from HIS Conception to HIS Ascension, nay, from the day of man's Fall, should have taken place to do honor to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, if he were merely a man, merely the Founder of a new school of philosophy, merely the author of a purer code of morals than had yet been revealed, merely intended to bring to light the doctrine of a future state. I say, that if we had nothing more to rest on than the authority of the Church, the Doctrine that "OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, the SON of GOD, is GOD and man; GOD, of the substance of the FATHER, begotten before the worlds; and man, of the substance of HIS Mother, born in the world; perfect GOD and perfect man; of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting; equal to the FATHER, as touching HIS Godhead; and inferior to the FATHER as touching HIS manhood"¹; this Doctrine, preserved by the tradition of the Church in the Athanasian Creed, all the facts of the case considered, would be more probable, more likely to be true, than that which would represent such a long display of

¹ Athanasian Creed.

miraculous power, apparently so much more than was required, as intended only to usher into the world a mere human being.

But, to pass from probabilities to certainties, the contrary is asserted by the Scriptures, which, though sometimes involved in obscurity, are always consistent. From first to last the tradition of the Church is found to be in accordance with *them*. The Scriptures predicted, as we have seen, the coming of the LORD JESUS CHRIST; but they foretold HIS coming, according to the prophet Micah, who was referred to by the Priests and Scribes of the people, when Herod demanded of them where the MESSIAH was to be born, they foretold HIS coming as that of HIM “whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting”¹, from eternity, from the days of the everlasting period. They declared that the MESSIAH was to be “IMMANUEL”, that is, “GOD with us”²; that JEHOVAH had said of HIM, “Thou art MY SON, this day have I begotten Thee”³; that HE was to be called “the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of Eternity, the Prince of Peace”⁴. “Say unto the cities of Judah,” exclaimed the prophet Isaiah, “Behold your

¹ Micah v. 2.

² Matt. i. 23.

³ Matt. iii. 17.

⁴ Isaiah ix. 6.

GOD ! Behold the LORD GOD will come with a strong hand, and HIS arm shall rule for HIM : behold HIS reward is with HIM, and HIS work before HIM. HE shall feed HIS flock like a shepherd ; HE shall gather the lambs with HIS Arm, and carry them in HIS Bosom"¹. "Behold," said JEHOVAH by the voice of Jeremiah, "Behold the days come that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah"². "Behold the days come that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a KING shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In HIS days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely ; and this is HIS name whereby HE shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS"³.

And it was so. For the Gospel of St. John opens with the declaration that the WORD which "was made flesh, and dwelt among us", "was in the beginning"—HIS goings forth being of old—and "was with GOD", and "was GOD"; and that "all things were made by HIM, and without HIM was not any thing made that was made"⁴. And on every page of the New Testament the

¹ Isaiah xl. 9, 10, 11.

² Jer. xxxiii. 14.

³ Jer. xxiii. 6, 7.

⁴ John i. 3.

same blessed fact is inscribed as with a sunbeam. There we find it declared that, "without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; GOD was manifest in the flesh"¹; and that "GOD was in CHRIST, reconciling the world unto HIMSELF"². There we find it expressly stated that the LORD JESUS Christ is "the true GOD and eternal life"³, and that HE is "GOD our SAVIOUR"⁴, and "over all, GOD blessed for ever"⁵.

Admit this fact, then, that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is GOD as well as man, and immediately all difficulty vanishes. Admit the fact that, when the blessed Virgin brought forth her sinless Babe, and laid HIM in the manger, GOD was Incarnate, and we can at once perceive why the heavenly Hosts in their admiration broke forth into songs of joy. Admit the fact that "GOD was in CHRIST, reconciling the world unto HIMSELF," and then we can at once understand why, when HIS Ministry commenced, the Heavens were opened and the powers of hell disturbed. Admit that, when the LORD JESUS was going about doing good upon earth, the fulness of the GODHEAD was dwelling in HIM bodily⁶, and we

¹ 1 Tim. iii. 16.² 2 Cor. v. 19.³ 1 John v. 20.⁴ 1 Tim. i. 1.⁵ Rom. ix. 5.⁶ Col. ii. 9.

can at once appreciate His assumption of all the moral and potential attributes of the DEITY. Admit that the LORD JESUS was "IMMANUEL," "GOD with us", "GOD manifest in the flesh," and instead of being surprised that when HE humbled HIMSELF to death, even the death of the Cross¹, the sun should be darkened, and the rocks be rent, and the earth shaken, we shall rather marvel that all nature did not crumble into nothingness.

So consistent are the Scriptures, if we take them as a whole, in all their fulness, unction, and simplicity; so inconsistent, if wilful men will receive a part, and then reject whatever may not suit their pre-conceived conjectures.

But yet further. If God was indeed Incarnate when the LORD JESUS was born, we can understand why all nature was moved; but still we have only partially investigated the subject. How improbable is it that God should become Incarnate only to do what mere man might accomplish, what mere man had accomplished, only to act as a Teacher, as a Preacher of the resurrection of the dead. I only use, again, this kind of argument for as much as it is worth. God might have seen fit so to have ordained it. But still the probabilities, judging from all we

¹ Phil. ii. 8.

gather from the book of nature, compared with that of Revelation, would lie on the other side. But it was not to be a mere Teacher, not to be merely a Preacher of righteousness, though such HE was incidentally, that the SON of GOD took human nature upon HIM. No; HE came to counteract and remedy the injury inflicted by the malignant powers of darkness; HE came to bruise the Serpent's head; HE came to vindicate the Holiness of GOD, and to effect a reconciliation between the Holy ONE and HIS unholy creature; to be the Mediator through whom fallen man might be brought back to communion with GOD. HE came as a Deliverer: as such, HE was foreshadowed in the sacrificial types; as such foretold by the Prophets. HE came to bear our griefs and to carry our sorrows, to be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, that on HIM might be laid the iniquity of us all, that HE might bear the sins of many¹. So spake the prophet Isaiah concerning HIM. And, as "JESUS the SAVIOUR", HIS coming was announced by the Angel; as such, as the SAVIOUR, through whom peace was to descend upon men, HIS birth was proclaimed amid the multitudes of the heavenly Host². As "the LAMB of GOD which taketh

¹ Isaiah liii. 4—7.

² Mark ii. 11, 14.

away the sins of the world," HE was designated by HIS harbinger, when HIS Ministry commenced¹. HE came, as HE HIMSELF declared, "to give HIS life a ransom for many"²; HE came "that the world through HIM might be saved"³; HE came that HE might lay down HIS life for HIS sheep⁴, and shed HIS blood for the remission of sins⁵; HE came to be a propitiation for sin through faith in HIS blood⁶; HE came to be delivered for our offences⁷, and to die for us while we were yet sinners⁸; HE came to be our Paschal LAMB, and to be sacrificed for us⁹; HE came that by HIS death we might be reconciled to GOD¹⁰, and have Redemption through HIS blood¹¹; HE came to shed HIS blood for the remission of sins.

Here, then, was an object worthy of HIS coming, worthy of the coming of HIM who is the second Person of that blessed GODHEAD whose most glorious attribute is LOVE¹². HE came to the intent that now, not merely to this world and its inhabitants, but "unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be

¹ John i. 29.² Matt. xx. 28.³ John iii. 17.⁴ John x. 15.⁵ Matt. xxvi. 28.⁶ 1 John ii. 2. Rom. iii. 25.⁷ Rom. iv. 25.⁸ Rom. v. 8.⁹ 1 Peter i. 19.¹⁰ 2 Cor. v. 18.¹¹ Eph. i. 7.¹² 1 John iv. 8.

known, by the Church, the manifold wisdom of GOD, according to the eternal purpose which HE purposed in CHRIST JESUS our LORD"¹. What wonder that such a tremendous proof of inexpressible love should be a matter of rejoicing to all those hosts of creation who have kept their high estate, and are endowed with powers of spiritual discernment not even to be imagined by us! What wonder that these should be things which even "the Angels desire to look into!"² What wonder that a prophet under the former dispensation, having been admitted to a vision of Heaven and heavenly things, should have heard one Saint speaking to another, and saying, "How long shall it be ere these things come to pass!"³ What wonder that St. John should be permitted to see how these facts add, and will add, to the very joys of Heaven:—"And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many Angels round about the Throne; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying, with a loud voice, Worthy is the LAMB that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature

¹ Eph. iii. 10, 11.

² 1 Peter i. 12.

³ Dan. vi. 4.

which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto HIM that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the LAMB for ever and ever"¹.

If, then, on the hosts of Heaven such is the impression made, when merely contemplating this mystery of mercy as exhibited to others, how much more deep ought the impression to be upon us who are actually the subjects of this redeeming love! Oh! my brethren, what hearts of stone are our's, that we can hear, and read, and think of these things without being very, very different creatures from what we are! Deeper and deeper will the impression be as we grow more and more in Grace². As we grow in Grace, as by meditation we become better acquainted with the perfect requirements of God's perfect law, we shall become more sensible, more conscious, of the impotence of our nature, the plague of our hearts. If we find ourselves under the dominion of Grace, we may, indeed, thank God that we are what we are; we may thank HIM for the Grace of baptism, and for that good religious education, or that hearty sincere repentance, by which we have been able

¹ Rev. v. 11—14.

² 2 Pet. iii. 18.

to cultivate that Grace, and for the strengthening and refreshing which our souls receive in the blessed Communion¹; we may thank HIM for the means of Grace provided for us, and the hope of Glory² set before us; but still we shall be sadly conscious that the seed of all sin is in our hearts; so that if we had been less favorably situated, less carefully educated, less strongly supported, regenerated, renewed by supernatural Grace, if more strongly tempted, there are few sins that we might not have committed. Yes, it requires but little self-examination and self-knowledge to see that we are shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin³; but little of sensibility to reflect with horror on what, without a providential concurrence of circumstances, and the constant support of Grace, we might have been, and what, if that Grace were withdrawn, we might still be. I say not that we should all have been guilty of all kinds of sin, but by one besetting sin we should all have been hurried into misery. Where there is not lasciviousness, there may be pride; where not cruelty, avarice; and even when we have overcome our greater corruptions, still there are what are called "sins of daily incursion"; those innumerable

¹ Church Catechism.

² General Thanksgiving.

³ Psalm li. 5.

offences of which the very best of men are guilty, and which, however trifling they appear, may, nevertheless, be destructive; just as a ship may be sunk by a weight of sand, not less than by a weight of iron. Of these sins, the more we grow in Grace the more sensible we become, the more ready to exclaim, "A SAVIOUR, or I die! a REDEEMER, or I perish"!

The true CHRISTIAN will be thus continually humbling himself to the very dust, pulling down every high look and every proud thought, on the one hand, only to elevate himself, on the other, by the blessed conviction that he *has* a Saviour, that he *has* a Redeemer, "JESUS CHRIST the righteous," who says of HIMSELF, "I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the Ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the ALMIGHTY"¹.

¹ Rev. i. 8.

SERMON XIV.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

GALATIANS VI. 14.

*"But God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord
Jesus Christ."*

WE cannot accustom ourselves to meditate too deeply or too seriously upon the Holiness of the all-pure God¹. This truth is at once, and readily, admitted into the mind. If there be a God, HE must be Holy: we seem to know this by intuition. But do we meditate upon this truth sufficiently? It is, indeed, because they do *not*

¹ Lev. xix. 2. Isaiah vi. 3. Rev. iv. 8; vi. 10. Psalm cxlv. 17.

sufficiently meditate upon it, that some reject, with contempt, and others pass over in carelessness, the mysterious scheme of man's Redemption propounded to us in Scripture. The Scriptures labor to impress this fact upon our minds by ascribing holiness to every thing connected with GOD: Holy and reverend is HIS Name¹; the Throne HE sitteth on is a Throne of Holiness²; HE will hear us from HIS Holy Heaven³; Holy is HIS Habitation; Holiness becometh HIS House⁴; HIS Promise is Holy⁵; and HIS Covenant is Holy⁶; and HIS Law is Holy⁷; and HIS Scriptures are Holy⁸; and of HIMSELF HE saith, "I am the LORD your HOLY ONE"⁹. And there is a beauty in holiness which attracts to it all pure and sinless creatures. The Divine Holiness is a constant subject of sublime meditation to the Hosts of Heaven; it is their unceasing song of praise; their incessant chorus is "Holy, Holy, Holy LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, which was, and is, and is to come"¹⁰.

But to us fallen and sinful creatures this is an awful subject; to us the Holiness of GOD is a terrible thing, a subject full of terror; conscious

¹ Psalm cxi. 9.² Psalm xlvii. 8.³ Psalm xx. 6.⁴ Psalm xciii. 5.⁵ Psalm cv. 42.⁶ Dan. x. 28, 30.⁷ Rom. viii. 12.⁸ 2 Tim. iii. 15.⁹ Isaiah xliii. 15.¹⁰ Rev. iv. 8.

of unholiness in ourselves, the Holy God is to us a God of Terror. Why was it that men fell into idolatry? It was because they knew themselves to be unholy, and they felt that there could be no sympathy between holiness and unholiness. And the Heathens imagined, therefore, that their idols were powerful for good or for evil; but they never regarded any of their deities as holiness itself. They delighted, indeed, to record the *crimes* of their imaginary deities, as if for the very purpose of disarming them of the terrors of holiness, and of bringing them down to a level with themselves. Hence the force of the exclamation of Moses: "Who is like unto THEE, Oh! LORD, among the gods; who is, like THEE, glorious in Holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders"!¹ It was the Holiness of JEHOVAH which alarmed the men of Bethshemesh, when they said, "Who is able to stand before this Holy LORD God?"² "Ye cannot serve God," said Joshua to the people, and why? 'Because HE is a Holy GOD.' 'HE is a jealous GOD; HE will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins'³. No. To forgive sin, to be reconciled to sinners, without satisfaction being made, would

¹ Exod. xv. 11.² 1 Sam. vi. 20.³ Josh. xxiv. 19.

be incompatible with holiness; it would be to bring unholiness and holiness into contact, and make holiness cease to be holiness; and therefore it is that our GOD is a mighty GOD and terrible¹; HIS MAJESTY consists in HIS Holiness; and “with GOD,” says Job, “is terrible MAJESTY”². “The LORD MOST HIGH is terrible”³. When the LORD spake unto the children of Israel, the Mount Sinai was altogether in a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly; and to gaze on the LORD, who approached in the fire, was to perish⁴. You see, from the very nature of things, annihilation would ensue from approaching HIM who is the HOLY ONE. Even to Moses, who was permitted to draw nigher to the mountain than the others, “so terrible was the sight, that he said, I exceedingly fear and quake”⁵. And when emboldened by past mercies, he said, “I beseech THEE show me THY Glory”—the answer was, “Thou canst not see MY face, for there shall no *man* see ME and live”⁶; it is impossible for impure man, as such, to see ME in the fulness of

¹ Deut. vii. 21.² Job xxxvii. 22.³ Psalm xlvii. 2.⁴ Exod. xix. 18, 21.⁵ Heb. xii. 22.⁶ Exod. xxxiii. 20.

My Glory without instantly perishing. These are types of the reality; the spiritual mind rises through the external things to the heavenly things, and learns that as Israel in the flesh could not approach the Mount for the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the voice of the trumpet, so neither can the unholy spirit have communion with the HOLY SPIRIT.

I have said that, intrinsically, holiness is not terrific, but lovely: it is terrific to unholy creatures, because they have a sense to know that the approach of the HOLY ONE is destruction to all that is unholy. How magnificent, how glorious, how beautiful is the great luminary which acts as the centre of attraction, and the source of light to our solar system! Yet if *wax* be placed within the reach of its rays it will be melted into nothingness; if clay, it will be hardened to destruction; or were the sun to draw nearer to the earth, yea, but a little, the inhabitants of the earth would be consumed in the twinkling of an eye, and why? Because the nearer approach to that orb, in itself so glorious, would be incompatible with a nature such as our's. And, I repeat it, similar destruction would await our unholy souls, were they brought nearer to the SUN of Righteousness, if a method had not been devised by Omnipotent mercy to render possible what to man is impos-

sible¹. Why, indeed, is this world we dwell in so spiritually cold and wretched, that no one would consent to dwell in it eternally? It is because God is, as it were, removed from us: HE shines not upon us with the warmth of HIS Glory; HIS Glory is dimly, coldly reflected upon us through second causes. And it is so; because it is only by HIS withdrawing from us HIS Glory that such creatures as we are can live.

See how the case stands. It pleased God in his wisdom to create man, and to endow him with freedom of will²: a high endowment which might have been employed to the very highest purposes. But freedom of will implies a power to disobey. Man *did* disobey³. But disobedience is unholiness. Man became unholy, and, being himself unholy, begat an unholy race. But unholiness is alienation from God⁴, and alienation from God is misery⁵. Reconciliation, without atonement, is in the nature of things, divinely constituted, impossible⁶. The annihilation of our race would, therefore, have been mercy. Annihilation would have been better than everlasting misery. And as the misery occasioned by the unholiness of our race was not

¹ Matt. xix. 26. Luke i. 37.

² Gen. i. 16, 17.

³ Gen. iii. 6.

⁴ Heb. xii. 14.

⁵ Psalm xvi. 16. Eph. ii. 12.

⁶ Heb. ix. 22.

the result to each man of his personal act, but of original sin, we may, without presumption, suppose that the least of the two evils would have been ordained. But blessed be the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, HE has in HIS mercy devised the means by which an exception may be made to that which HE has constituted as the rule to all creation, by which an unholy race may be brought back into communion with the Holy God, without impeachment of HIS Holiness; and so now in Christian countries, where the Cross of CHRIST is planted, the misery of those who shall be miserable will be the result merely of their individual acts.

You see, then, the design of GOD in the Redemption of man; it is to remove the barrier which rendered our approach to the GODHEAD a thing impossible; it is to reconcile what, without the interference of OMNIPOTENCE, would, from the very nature of things, be irreconcilable; to bring about what, to created intelligences, must have appeared to be an impossibility; to prove that GOD can continue Holy, and yet bring back to communion with HIM, the HOLY ONE, a race of beings by nature unholy; and thus the fallen state of human nature has been the means of calling forth a brighter display of the Divine attributes. Perhaps it has been the occasion of

discovering to other beings besides man the plurality of persons in the one Divine nature. Certain it is, that the ALMIGHTY God has been pleased to make known to us that, though the essence, the substance of the GODHEAD is One, though there is consequently a unity of will, yet in this One Essence there are Three Persons¹. There is in the DEITY, with respect to man, one will; that will being that man, though unholy, shall be rendered capable of communion with the HOLY ONE. For the accomplishment of that one Divine will, each of the Persons in the One Essence has a peculiar office². As in the *creation* of man you will find a consultation, if I may so say, held by the Three Persons in the GODHEAD: “Let *us* make man in *our* Image”³; as, in like manner, a consultation, so to say, is held after the fall of man: “Behold, man is become as one of Us”⁴; so we find that THEY acted, as it were, by Covenant on the subject of man’s Redemption: in this Covenant we find the EVERLASTING FATHER set before us as the Person in the GODHEAD to whom satisfaction shall be paid, the PERSON in the GODHEAD exacting Justice,

¹ Creed of St. Athanasius.

² Sixth Answer in Church Catechism.

³ Gen. i. 26.

⁴ Gen. iii. 22.

and yet in mercy sending HIS only begotten SON¹; preparing a body for HIM, appointing HIM a Kingdom, a Mediatorial Kingdom, laying help upon One that is Mighty²; giving HIM for a Covenant to the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages³. Hence we find the LORD CHRIST represented as the MEDIATOR of a better Covenant⁴; and HIS Blood is called the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant⁵. Hence we can understand what St. Peter means when he says of the LORD: "HE was delivered by the determinate Council and foreknowledge of God"; and, again, "HE was verily pre-ordained before the foundation of the world⁶". Hence St. John says, "HE was the LAMB slain from the foundation of the world"; and St. Paul: "HE saved us according to HIS own purpose and Grace, which was given us in CHRIST JESUS before the world began"⁸.

We ought always to bear in mind that this Covenant hath existed from everlasting among the PERSONS of the One GODHEAD for the accomplishment of the One Divine will, that we may understand the Scriptures rightly, and, while we

¹ Heb. x. 5.² Psalm lxxxix. 19.³ Isaiah xlix. 8.⁴ Heb. viii. 6.⁵ Heb. xiii. 21.⁶ 1 Pet. i. 20.⁷ Rev. xiii. 8.⁸ 2 Tim. i. 9.

adore the mercy of the SON, may never forget the equal mercy of the FATHER and of the HOLY GHOST, since, while each PERSON has vouchsafed to discharge HIS peculiar office, the act of mysterious mercy is the act of GOD, the Blessed TRINITY.

But our immediate purpose now is to consider what, according to this Covenant, was done for us by GOD the SON. Co-eval, co-essential, co-eternal with the FATHER, HE is set before us as saying, Lo! I come in the Volume of the Book,—(or, as it may be translated, in the Instrument, the Indenture, the Covenant, which exists between THEE and ME,)—in the Volume of the Book it is written of ME, to do THY will, O GOD, (O GOD, the FATHER,) I am content to do it¹. And being thus come, having assumed the Body prepared for HIM, HE who was with GOD and was GOD²; HE who, being in the form of GOD thought it not robbery to be equal with GOD, made HIMSELF of no reputation, and took upon HIM the form of a servant, and was made in likeness of man. HE was found in fashion as a man³. So that in CHRIST the two natures, the Divine and human, were united in One Person; ONE; not by conversion of the GODHEAD into

¹ Heb. x. 7; Psalm xl. 7, 8.

² John i. 1.

³ Phil. ii. 6—8.

flesh, but by taking the manhood into God ; One, altogether ; not by confusion of substance, but by Unity of Person. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one CHRIST.

And thus there is a MEDIATOR ; a BEING, through whom man, unholy by nature, can be brought, as it were, into contact with God, and so be rendered holy, and, as a holy one, have full fruition of everlasting bliss. The LORD CHRIST in that HE is perfect man, made sin for us¹ ; for us accounted unholy, and treated as one unholy², though without actual sin³ ; the LORD CHRIST, as man, is approachable by man⁴ ; HE is a HIGH PRIEST, who can be touched with a sense of our infirmities, for, though without sin, HE was tempted like as we are⁵. “ In that HE HIMSELF hath suffered, being tempted, HE is able to succour them that are tempted ”⁶. If we approach HIM, HE will approach us, and form a mysterious union with us ; HE will dwell in us, and we shall dwell in HIM ; HE will be one with us, and we shall be One with HIM⁷. But who is this that becometh One with us, and will permit us to

¹ 2 Cor. v. 21.² St. Matt. xxvii.³ Art. xv. 1 Pet. ii. 22.⁴ Heb. x. 19.⁵ Heb. iv. 15.⁶ Heb. ii. 18.⁷ John vi. 56 ; xiv. 17.

become one with HIM? Man? Undoubtedly. Perfect man; but also perfect GOD. If, therefore, we are in union with HIM, we are in union with GOD. And this is ever the object of our MEDIATOR's intercession. "Holy FATHER," saith our LORD, "keep through THINE own name those whom THOU hast given ME, that they may be One as WE are One"¹. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe in ME through their word; that they all may be one as THOU, FATHER, art in ME and I in THEE, that they also may be One with Us." "I in them and THOU in ME, that they may be perfect in One"². In another Chapter of this same Gospel of St. John our LORD saith: "At that day ye shall know that I am in MY FATHER and ye in ME, and I in you"³. "If a man love ME, he will keep my Words; and MY FATHER will love him, and WE will come unto HIM, and take our abode with HIM"⁴. And so through HIM, to whom sin is imputed for us, holiness is imputed to us; and, we being thus regarded as holy creatures, the HOLY GHOST takes possession of our souls, and imparts holiness; and thus fulfils HIS part of the Covenant⁵.

¹ John xvii. 11.

² John xvii. 20—23.

³ John xiv. 20.

⁴ John xiv. 23.

⁵ 1 Cor. vi. 19; xii. 3.

But, before this could be accomplished, we have seen that the MEDIATOR, though HOLY in HIMSELF, was to be made sin, or accounted unholy for us, and thus pay the penalty of sin. HE who is the Everlasting SÓN of the FATHER not only took upon HIM the form of a servant, but, being found in fashion as a man, HE became obedient unto Death, even the death of the Cross¹; and by that, HIS precious death, made the Atonement through which HIS Mediation became efficacious².

This mystery of mercy, then, is all dependent upon the Cross of CHRIST.

To prepare men's minds for the reception of a fact, which, from the very incomprehensibleness of its mercy, would stagger and astound the unprepared mind, it was prefigured by types, and gradually developed by prophecy. We ought to regard the whole of the revealed and recorded facts of the Old Testament as intended to shadow forth this mysterious event or its consequences; and we Christians are not to interpret the New Testament by the Old, but the Old by the New; not the anti-type by the type, but the type by the anti-type; not the substance by the shadow, but the shadow by the substance. Knowing, as we do, the mystery of the Cross, we can easily

¹ Phil. ii. 8.

² 2 Cor. v. 15.

perceive how all the sacrifices under the Law, by showing the necessity of there being a satisfaction made, before the DEITY could be approached, prepared the way before HIM, in the minds of men.

And now, my brethren, having thought of these deep things of GOD, which, to the meditative Christian mind are always present by faith, are we not, one and all—I speak, of course, to believers—are we not, one and all, ready to exclaim with the Apostle, GOD forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of the LORD JESUS CHRIST? In what else should we glory? Except for the Cross of CHRIST, what are we? What, but unholy creatures, and, as such, miserable, perishing creatures? I pause not, one moment, to speak of the nothingness of worldly wealth, and worldly power, and worldly fame; I pause not, one moment, to speak of the endowments of the mind, talents, learning—for all these things come to an end—and all these things are not our's; they come to us, as ungodly men say, by chance, by circumstances; as godly men say, by the PROVIDENCE of GOD; they are not subjects on which to glory; they are merely the instruments lent us as the means by which, as individuals, we are to work out our Salvation, and for the use of which we shall be responsible;

they soon perish with our perishing selves. How soon, after the first glow of youthful enthusiasm, is the nothingness of all these things perceived! They are pursued and desired afterwards rather through the force of habit or of a piqued temper, than from any idea of their intrinsic worth. Addressing a congregation of earnest-minded persons, I deem it not necessary to dwell upon these points. But there are privileges in which even earnest-minded persons may glory: the privileges of Grace; the high, the glorious privileges of their election. It was lawful for the Israelites to glory in their being of the Circumcision; and it is lawful for us to glory in our having been baptized into the Church, and becoming the children of GOD. As we advance in godliness, too, there is an increasing communion between us and our GOD¹. The more holy men of our race have obtained glimpses of the Divine Glory; so it has been; and so, doubtless, it is now. The fulness of the Divine Glory, as we have already seen, could not be revealed to Moses; even he rejoiced with trembling, but still he was permitted to approach GOD; still, though GOD said unto him: "Thou canst not see MY Face, for there shall no *man*

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 18.

see ME and live"; yet HE added, "Behold there is a place by ME, and thou shalt stand upon a rock; and it shall come to pass, while my Glory passeth by, that I will put thee in the cleft of the rock, and will cover THEE with MY hand while I pass by; and I will take away MINE hand, and thou shalt see my back parts, but MY face shall not be seen"¹. And, as I have said, so it still is: "You hath HE quickened," writes the Apostle, "who were dead in consequence of trespasses and sins; wherein, in times past, ye walked, according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom, also, we all had our conversation, in times past, in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as others; but GOD, who is rich in mercy, for HIS great love wherewith HE loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with CHRIST; (by Grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in CHRIST JESUS"². Yes, unholiness would have separated us for ever from GOD, except for the MEDIATOR; but approaching

¹ Exodus xxxiii. 21, 23.

² Ephes. ii. 2, 6.

GOD through the MEDIATOR, GOD draws nigh unto us, and holds near communion with us as we become more holy. We may, indeed, rejoice in these our privileges, but we may not forget on what those privileges rest; we may not overlook the Cross of CHRIST; that which is our shame, because it proclaims the unholiness of our race; that Cross in which, though it be our shame, is, nevertheless, our glory, since it brings us back to our GOD. Yes, the Cross is stamped on every ordinance of the Gospel. Do you come to be baptized—what is it that you come to do? You come to put on CHRIST¹; that is, to have the merits of HIS Atonement applied to your souls. Do you kneel down to pray? You do not dare to approach the FATHER, except in the name of HIM who, by HIS Cross and Passion, hath rendered the FATHER accessible to our prayers². Do you come to the Eucharist? What is it that you seek, but the Communion of the Body and the Communion of the Blood of Christ³? What is it that you desire, but again to apply to yourselves the merits of our LORD'S Atonement? What is that you do, but make a memorial of the one full, perfect, and sufficient

¹ Gal. iii. 29.² Gal. iv. 6. Rom. v. 2. Eph. iii. 12.³ 1 Cor. x. 16.

sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, once made for all men upon the Cross? What is it that you expect, but that Grace which proceeds from union with Christ, and through HIM that union with GOD, which, except for the Cross, could never have existed?

As the brazen serpent was lifted up in the Wilderness, and those who gazed upon it were healed of the sting that was in them¹, as if to prove to them that their healing was the result not of any act of their own, but of the free unmerited mercy of JEHOVAH, so has the SON of Man been lifted up, the anti-type succeeding the type; as the Israelite was not healed unless he raised up his eye, so we must fix our mental eye upon the Saviour by faith; as the Israelite was obliged to exert himself to have the brazen serpent within his ken, so must we have recourse to the means of Grace; as the Israelite, after he was healed, was to show forth his gratitude by his works, so is it with ourselves. There HE, the Divine SAVIOUR, hangs upon the accursed Tree, and to him the eye of faith must ever look. To them from whom the Gospel is hid², whose eyes are blinded, so that, seeing, they cannot see³, whose

¹ Numb. xxi. 9.

² 2 Cor. iv. 3.

³ Matt. xiii. 13.

hearts are hardened¹, HE is but as one of the sons of men ; the eye of faith pierces the veil, and sees within the glories of the GODHEAD revealed ; sees that which makes the Sacrifice infinitely meritorious. And then, does sorrow come upon the believer, is he heavy laden ?—he looks to the Cross, he remembers the agony of HIM who hanged thereon ; his own sorrows appear to him as nothing ; he rejoices even in his suffering ; he looks to the Cross, he knows what Grace flows from thence ; he knows that the SPIRIT of the COMFORTER emanates thence ; he knows that by the Cross there is purchased for him an inheritance *there* where they shall hunger no more nor thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat, for the LAMB which is in the midst of the Throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain².

Or is the believer sorely tried by temptation ? He looks to the Cross, and he remembers that HE who hangs thereon was in all points tempted like as we are, although without sin³ ; he knows, therefore, that HE can sympathize with our infirmities ;

¹ Mark vi. 52.

² Rev. xxi., xxii.

³ Heb. iv. 15.

he knows, therefore, that as he daily asks for strength, strength will, day by day, be given. Or does he incline to despond? He looks again to the Cross, and hears the SAVIOUR say, "Him that cometh unto ME I will in nowise cast out"¹.

Is the believer stretched upon the bed of death, that bed of death which awaits us all? Is the fearful future before him? Is there before him a dark and dread abyss? Is his faint heart inclined to tremble? He looks to the Cross, and there he sees Death swallowed up in victory. He looks to the Cross, and thence he hears a voice saying, Oh! Death, where is thy sting; oh! Grave, where is thy victory?² I will ransom thee from the power of the Grave; I will redeem thee from Death. Oh! Death, I will be thy plagues; oh! Grave I will be thy destruction³; and he dies with the grateful expression on his lips, Thanks be to GOD which giveth us the victory through our LORD JESUS CHRIST⁴. And his spirit enters the Holy of Holies, a partaker of the Divine nature, prepared, through the Cross of CHRIST, to bear the intensity of that Glory which beams with everlasting joy on all that is holy.

¹ John vi. 37.

² 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55.

³ Hosea xiii. 14.

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 57.

The Cross of CHRIST, the Cross of CHRIST : it is marked by the baptismal waters on our brow. The Cross of CHRIST, the Cross of CHRIST : it is the banner under which we fight the good fight of faith against the world, the flesh, and the devil¹. It is our shame among those who contend for the dignity of human nature ; it is our glory among those who, knowing us to be by nature desperately wicked, see in the Cross of CHRIST the sign of the Covenant of Grace. Well was it in the primitive Christians to give token of their glorying in the Cross of CHRIST, at their going out and at their coming in, at their down-sitting and their up-rising, when they took off or put on their garments, when they resorted to the mart and when they recreated at home¹: on the highway, in the steep summits of the hills, in the mountain gorges and vallies, on the house-tops and the tessellated floors, the Cross was seen. And if we demonstrate our faith by words rather than by external signs, still with them and with the Apostle let us say from the heart, and with all the heart, GOD forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

¹ See Tertullian de Corona Militis, c. 3.

SERMON XV.

THE SECOND ADVENT.

ACTS I. 11.

“Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven.”

THE Church is, at this season¹, commemorating the joyful event of our Blessed LORD's Resurrection: HE is not dead, but risen². HE hath risen, not a Spirit, but the self-same LORD JESUS who, for our sins, was crucified, “perfect man as well as perfect God”³, the Divine SAVIOUR. HE hath risen, if with a body clothed upon with glory, still in the flesh, still, as HE designated

¹ Easter.

² Matt. xxviii. 6.

³ St. Luke xxiv. 37.

HIMSELF, the SON of Man, the Second PERSON of the Blessed Trinity, having "taken the manhood into GOD"¹. HE hath risen, the MESSIAH, the KING of kings and LORD of lords, the Sovereign RULER of HIS people. For a little while we see HIM not; HE hath gone to prepare a place for us, that where HE is there may we be also²; but in HIS own good time this same LORD JESUS, the very LORD JESUS who was crucified for us, GOD and man, will come from Heaven³. To HIS second coming the prophecies of Scripture direct the attention of Christians quite as powerfully as to HIS first coming they directed the attention of the Jews. And who shall see HIM when HE cometh again? When, as the Apostle predicts, HE shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel and the Trump of GOD⁴? When HE shall come, not as HE came before in a state of humiliation, but in HIS Glory, and all HIS Holy Angels with HIM⁵? HE will be seen by those who shall be then alive and on the earth. But not only by them; you will observe the address of the Angels in our text was directed to the very men who saw our LORD

¹ Athanasian Creed.

² John xiv. 2.

³ Acts i. 11.

⁴ 1 Thess. iv. 14.

⁵ Matt. xvi. 27.

ascend : Ye, even ye men of Galilee, even ye who stand gazing up into Heaven, ye, even ye, shall see HIM come from Heaven. But these men of Galilee have gone the way of all flesh. Their place is nowhere to be found ; their spirits are in the unseen abode ; their bodies have long since crumbled into dust. And yet the LORD JESUS is to come bodily, and they are to see HIM with their eyes, and to hear HIM with their ears. And not they only ; even those who condemned HIM shall hereafter see HIM. To the High Priest of the Jews and those, his compeers in iniquity, who sought false witness against the LORD JESUS, our LORD HIMSELF declared : Hereafter shall ye, even ye, the workers of iniquity, hereafter shall ye see the SON of Man, (they are to see HIM, observe, who is man as well as GOD, the man CHRIST JESUS,) sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven¹. Even they who pierced HIM, as we learn from St. John, shall see HIM : Behold, HE cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see HIM, and they also that pierced HIM². All the tribes of the earth, saith our LORD HIMSELF, shall mourn ; and they shall see the SON of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and

¹ Mat. xxvi. 64.² Rev. i. 7.

great Glory¹. The day, then, is coming when we shall, all of us, see the LORD JESUS CHRIST, face to face, even as a man seeth his fellow-man. Yes. Our faith is that of the Patriarch: "I know that my REDEEMER liveth, and that HE shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see GOD, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold and not another"². The faith of Job is established, and confirmed by the express declarations of the SON of GOD HIMSELF: "The hour is coming," saith our LORD, "in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the SON of Man, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done evil unto the Resurrection of Damnation"³. Yet more expressly we are taught that the sea will give up the dead that are in it, and death and the grave deliver up the dead that are in them; and every man shall be judged according to his works⁴. Here observe what is predicted and promised is a bodily resurrection—a resurrection of the body. It is assumed that the immaterial soul dieth not; (at least, not by

¹ Mat. xxiv. 30.² Job xix. 25.³ John v. 28, 29.⁴ Rev. xx. 13.

dissolution, for the death of the soul is something more awfully horrible than flesh and blood can bear to hear of; a death which does not issue in a groan or pass off in the twinkling of an eye, like the death of the body, but is one everlasting pang;) what we find declared in the passages I have referred to is, that the grave shall give up its dead—and what is it that the grave contains? That the sea shall give up its dead—and what is it that the sea contains? Not the souls, but the bodies of men. The promise, therefore, is, that they, whose bodies have crumbled into nothingness, whether in the earth or in the deep, shall hear the voice of the SON of Man and come forth. The whole earth and sea is, as it were, one mighty field sown with the bodies of men; and in the proper time it shall give them forth again. What is necessary to preserve identity we know not; we know not in what the identity of our Resurrection bodies will consist; but this we do know, that whether we shall die first, and so be raised, or whether CHRIST, our LORD, shall return to this earth before we die—and it may be so—when CHRIST JESUS shall appear again, HE will be seen by us; by you, my Brethren, and by me; by us, who have passed through many and marvellous changes from infancy to youth, and from youth to

maturity ; by us, who were alive ten, twenty, forty years ago, and who will be still alive at those latter days. And for this re-appearance of our LORD in Glory, the early Christians, as we learn from the New Testament, longed with intense affection ; they longed to see the SAVIOUR who died for their sins, and rose again for their Justification. In almost every Epistle we find allusion made to the comfort afforded them by their hope of the glorious appearing of the Great GOD and our SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST¹.

So earnestly did these early Christians, who lived in the Apostles' fellowship and walked by the Apostolic rule, desire the second coming of our LORD, that, as we often find to be the case, their earnest desire grew into a confident expectation that the day of CHRIST was at hand ; and therefore the Apostle was directed to warn them of the error of thus deciding on the times and the seasons which the FATHER hath left in his own power. In writing to the Thessalonians, St. Paul expressly warns them : " Let no man deceive you by any means ; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the Son of Perdition, who

¹ Tit. ii. 13. See also 1 Cor. i. 7. 1 Thess. i. 9, 10.
Phil. iii. 20. Heb. ix. 28.

opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called GOD or that is worshipped ; so that he, as GOD, sitteth in the Temple of GOD, showing himself that he is GOD"¹.

Now we, perhaps, have fallen into the very opposite extreme. I suppose that few who pretend to be guided by Scripture will deny the fact that it is expressly foretold that our LORD JESUS CHRIST is to come again, with his vesture on, KING of Kings and LORD of Lords, to establish HIS Kingdom in Glory²; but if we may judge from the devotional writings of the day, this truth seems seldom to be realized as a topic of consolation. And from not having this blessed fact brought prominently forward, men seem almost to have forgotten that the times which are immediately to precede our LORD'S second coming are to be times of wickedness and mourning. In a passage I have just quoted, you have heard it said, that all the tribes of the earth shall mourn ; and in the Second Epistle to Timothy it is declared that in the last days perilous times shall come³. And in the First Epistle to the same Bishop of Ephesus it is solemnly announced: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 3.

² Rev. xix. 16.

³ 2 Tim. xiii. 1.

latter days some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils"¹.

Now, when the Apostle, in writing to the Thessalonians, alluded to that Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, who is to be revealed, his contemporaries would know at once that he referred to the Anti-Messiah, the Anti-Christ of whom Daniel has predicted, that he shall speak great swelling words against the MOST HIGH, and shall wear out the Saints of the MOST HIGH²; and whose character has been more fully developed by St. John, who, in the Apocalypse, says, "There shall be given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies, and power shall be given unto him to continue forty and two months; and he shall open his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His Holy Tabernacle and them that dwell in Heaven; and it shall be given unto HIM to make war with the Saints, and to overcome them; and power shall be given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations; and all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Book of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"³. There is to be a falling away, a general

¹ 1 Tim. iv. 1.

² Dan. vii. 25.

³ Rev. xiii. 5—9.

apostacy from the Christian religion, and Anti-Christ, an Infidel leader, is to appear with mighty powers : His coming, saith St. Paul¹, “is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and all the deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.” The persecution against the people of Christ will be awful in the extreme : “There shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be, and except those days be shortened there shall no flesh be saved ; but, for the Elect’s sake, those days shall be shortened”². It is, doubtless, to support his people in the contemplation of the coming evil, that it has been predicted that the period of the Anti-Christian persecution shall be very short, its duration being specified : The Saints, saith the Prophet Daniel, “shall be given into his hand until a time, and times, and a dividing of time”³; which terms will be easily understood, by reference to the margin of the 11th Chapter, verse 13th, and to the 16th verse of the 4th Chapter of the same Prophet, to mean a year, two years, and half-a-year, which is the same period as the two thousand two hundred and three score days

¹ 2 Thes. ii. 9.

² Mat. xxiv. 1, 2.

³ Dan. vii. 25.

of the witnesses in the 11th Chapter of the Apocalypse, and of the flight of the woman into the Wilderness in the 12th Chapter of the same Book—the same period as the time, and times, and half-a-time, during which she is nourished from the face of the Serpent¹; all symbols, which point, by their synchronism, to one future period of tribulation for three-and-a-half years.

Now, if these things are to happen, ere HE shall come again, whom the Apostles saw go into Heaven, it is important that we should bear the fact in mind. But these Scriptures are directly at variance with the expectations of men in the present age; they, if they admit that the present times are perilous, are confidently expecting that they will grow not worse but better. They seem to think that the tide of intellect is hastening the renovation of the world; that education will do much, that improved systems of government will do more: the discoveries of science are to make us “as gods knowing good and evil”². Philosophy is inventing a code of morals by which, without restraint upon our sensual appetites, the world may become perfect; and whole classes of religionists, in like manner, seem to think that, by the same kind of worldly policy and human

¹ Rev. xii. 14.

² Gen. iii. 5.

activity, a universal conversion of mankind will be accomplished, and a millennial blessedness be established. To meet these views, the prophecies of Scripture have been explained away. Just like the Jews of old, just like the modern neologians—what I speak of is, in fact, neology—men first determine not to believe the Bible, when the truths it tells are unwelcome and unpalatable, or inconsistent with the humanly invented system of doctrine which they may have adopted; and then they attach a meaning to its words, to reconcile their minds to the rejection of its verity, without seeming to deny its Inspiration. It has been attempted by learned men to show that these prophecies have been fulfilled, but with what success is at once apparent, when we find that scarcely two commentators are agreed as to what the facts are, in which they have been fulfilled; and by the twisting of history, sometimes by its actual falsification, in order, by a Procrustean process, to make it support one or other of these theories, the Infidel is disgusted, and becomes hardened in his infidelity, by being led to doubt the truth of all prophecy. Whereas, in all other instances, fulfilled prophecy is so plain, that “he may run that readeth”¹. How plain, how easy of

¹ Hab. ii. 2.

interpretation, are the prophecies relating to the destruction of Jerusalem and the return from Babylon, to the Advent, to the Offices, to the Atonement, to the Divinity of our LORD when HE came, the great HIGH PRIEST, to offer HIMSELF a sacrifice for the sins of the world ! There is no difficulty here in showing the correspondence between the prediction and the predicted event. But what, before its accomplishment, was a warning, after its fulfilment, became an irrefragable evidence. And, doubtless, all will be as plain, when the predictions relating to the Anti-Christ have been accomplished. Oh ! my Brethren, let us beware how we dare to trifle with the Inspired Word of GOD. It is, indeed, an awful thing to invent a system of theology for ourselves, or adopt one invented by some other uninspired man, and then to try and force Scripture, as if it were a nose of wax, into an accordance with our views. Let us rather prostrate our minds before the written Word, prepared to go whithersoever it may lead us ; and, while we admit that there is always a high, mysterious, concurrent, spiritual meaning to be attached to its Words, perhaps more than one, let us beware of spiritualizing away its literal sense ; the literal meaning, wherever it will make sense, being always that which we are first

to apply to it. And so doing, we shall understand these prophecies as they were understood by all Christian writers, without, I believe, a single exception, for the first twelve hundred years, to denote, not a corruption of, but a complete falling away from, Christianity, an open denial of the FATHER and the SON, which will take place a few years before our LORD'S Second Advent, the persecution arising out of it lasting for three years and a half; and as to the leader or head of the Apostacy, that it will be an individual requiring worship to be paid to himself from all men on pain of death, but suffering none to be offered to CHRIST or to GOD.

When these things are to take place we know not, but this we do know, that they will come upon us in a time and manner we do not expect; men will be eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage; they will be buying and selling, and planting and building, and will find themselves in the midst of the era of Anti-Christ without being aware of it¹: rapid will be the events which precede the coming of the LORD, and that day will come upon us as a thief in the night². But looking to all the works of the ALMIGHTY, we see that there is generally a long,

¹ St. Luke xxiv. 38, et seq.

² 1 Thes. v. 2. 2 Pet. iii. 10.

gradual preparation for every particular crisis. Whether the world is not preparing itself for the appearance of an Infidel Anti-Christ judge ye; but judge not until you have marked the signs of the times. When we see the several nations of the world disconnecting themselves more and more from religion, the vast majority of the people in every nation regarding religion rather as a personal than a national concern; when we see in Holland, Germany, America, systems established of a purely secular education, and remember that when we abstain from giving religious instruction we virtually give lessons in infidelity; when we hear religious persons complaining of the very little real progress that the Christian cause is making compared to its success in former times; when we find Infidelity to be actually organizing itself; when we know that it has its missionaries regularly established, and working on those masses of the people which have long been dead and indifferent to any religion, and are therefore prepared to be fierce, and heady, and high-minded, against all religion; when we find that it has its enthusiasts, its fanatics, men set on fire, as eager for the extirpation as pious men have been for the establishing of the Church of CHRIST; when we find, in this age, too many of those marks which the Apostle predicts will be characteristic of the perilous times which are to

be in the last days; when we find men to be lovers of their own selves, (or selfish upon principle, the principle of a boasted philosophy, even upon the principles sometimes of religion itself, those principles which make religion to be not a national but a mere personal consideration, relating to the welfare of our own individual souls rather than the promotion of GOD'S Glory;) when we find them to be covetous, (taking from the Church even that which belongs to the Divine HEAD of the Church,) proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, (literally true in our manufacturing districts, virtually true in the almost universal disrespect for authority,) unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, (or covenant-breakers; and when was the baptismal covenant more contemned than it now is by many even who deem themselves spiritual?) false-accusers, (and whether we look to the Press of the profane world or to that more especially of the religious world, it is difficult to conceive it possible that this sin, directed against all that is highest in station and holiest in practice, can be carried, even at the instigation of the Father of Lies, to a greater extent than it is,) incontinent, fierce, despisers of them that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying

the power thereof¹; when these things are noted by Scriptural Christians, it cannot but be that they will look to the sure word of prophecy, and think of those things which are coming on the earth, which must come some time or other, and therefore may come in our time.

But because we believe all this, because we have more faith in God's infallible Word than in all the boastings of self-sufficient man, because we are expecting the great apostacy, because we think that the spirit of Anti-Christ which has worked from the beginning is growing more and more predominant, is this to paralyse exertion? Are we to stand idle in the market-place?² Are we to do nothing? Are we to disobey the Great HEAD of the Church when HE commands us to preach the Gospel to every creature?³ Is it thus, my Brethren, that men act when their house is in flames? Do they then retire to some place which the very brightness of the conflagration points out to them as one of security, and there content themselves with watching or idly bewailing the progress of the devastation? Do they not rather bestir themselves busily to rescue from the devouring element all that they can? Do not

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 2—5.

² Matt. xx. 23.

³ Mark xvi. 15.

they rather endanger their lives, to snatch from the destruction, their children, their family, their friends, their dependants? And so must it be with us. From the devastations of Infidelity we must snatch all that we can: instead of seeking, like madmen, to hold parly with the increasing conflagration, we must rescue from the soul-destroying smoke of the bottomless pit, from the great furnace, from the pillars of darkness, each soul of man over whom we have influence or control. Events are with God; duties with us. Who shall escape, God will provide; to prepare the means is what we, His servants, are to do. Therefore we must institute our missions, that those, who shall be saved when Anti-Christ shall appear, may have in every land a home to fly unto. Therefore, directly as regards our own Church, indirectly as regards foreign Churches, by recourse to legitimate means, and those only, we must encourage a course of amendment, improvement, and advancement in godliness. Therefore we must erect sanctuaries throughout the length and the breadth of the land, and enable our Bishops to establish Clergy in desolate places. Therefore we must give our most cordial, zealous, energetic support to those schools which have for their object the promotion of God's Glory, and the advancement of CHRIST's Kingdom.

No, my Brethren, our dependence upon the prophecies of our God will not paralyse exertion ; but this it will do, it will prevent our beating the air¹; it will prevent our wasting our energies upon what is impracticable ; it will fix them upon what is practicable ; it will prevent our lowering the tone of our religion so as to make it accordant with the feelings of the mass of mankind, the spirit of the age ; and it will make us solely intent upon maintaining the truth, nothing but the truth, but the whole truth, as it is in Jesus²; it will prevent our having recourse to that base disingenuousness which would lead us to bribe persons into the Church, by representing our principles to be less illiberal and intolerant, as the world deems of illiberality and intolerance, than they really are ; and it will lead us to seek converts by the mere exhibition of the real beauty of holiness³; it will utterly banish and drive away all notions of expediency, which, in religion, is one of the worst abominations, as evincing an utter want of faith in the special Providence of God, and it will enthrone a calm, uncompromising, consistent, unworldly, world-defying sense of duty in its place ; it will completely exorcise that political,

¹ 1 Cor. ix. 26.

² Acts xx. 27.

³ 1 Chron. xvi. 29.

scheming, fierce, heady, high-minded, false-accusing spirit, which what is called the religious world is too apt to carry from the senate to the platform, from the arena of political warfare to what ought to be the calm abode of patient faith. Believe in the truths which have now been propounded, and you will then understand the firmness, the obstinacy if you will, with which true Churchmen, utterly reckless of all wordly consequences, contend for every principle, every particle of a principle; and if they are reproached by the political religionist, because by so doing they will decrease the numerical strength of the Establishment, you will be able to silence the reprover, by referring him to the "sure word of prophecy"¹, which declares that so it must be. You will understand why it is that they are so jealous over the Church, why they so punctiliously watch every pin by which the Tabernacle is fastened. Their's is no idle, childish dispute, as between sect and sect; their's is no party advocacy of an Establishment, which they know, as the nation apostatizes, as in common with all the nations of the world it will do, must sooner or later fall; their's is no irritating contention for doctrines as for mere opinions; their's is no idle

¹ 2 Pet. i. 19.

love of forms and ceremonies, except as symbolical of truth, as connecting the present with past, as carrying us through the visible into the invisible, as means of preaching through the eye¹, and as marks of reverence to the Sovereign RULER of the universe; but their desire is that the Church of CHRIST, not only by the orthodoxy of its doctrine, but by the increasing steadiness of its discipline, the oneness of its operations and its spirit, the solemnity of its ordinances, the grace of its Sacraments, the Catholicism of its tradition, the Scripturalness of its teaching, the Apostolicness of its government, the holiness of its members, may stand confest, in every land, the Ark of the LORD, in which men may be brought into union with CHRIST, and, through HIM, with God, when the fiery deluge of Anti-Christian persecution shall rage around, and may exhibit a character not to be mistaken by those who shall be found during the time, and times, and dividing of a time, really united to the LORD JESUS: especially would they have that branch of the Church to which they, by filial relations, are more peculiarly attached, rendered so conformable to

¹ "The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of CHRIST is a visible word, because it worketh the same thing in the eyes which the Word worketh in the ears."—Confession of the Martyr Robert Samuel, who was burnt 18th Aug., 1555.

the model of the Church as it existed when Apostles, Saints, and Martyrs won their crown of martyrdom therein, that when those same Apostles, Saints, and Martyrs return to earth triumphant with their Glorified SAVIOUR, they may recognize it at once as their ancient home.

At all events, my Brethren, let us, as individuals, seek for Grace, that we may put on the whole armour of God¹; let our loins be girded, and our lights burning; let us be like men who wait for their Lord². Depend upon it, he will never die the death of a martyr who is not striving to lead the life of a saint. It is not by the luxurious, self-indulgent piety of those whose religion is a literature or a sentiment that we shall prepare ourselves to fight the battles of the LORD. We must mortify all the narrow, contracted, malicious, envious, proud, cruel dispositions, which are engendered by selfishness, and fostered by party spirit; we must, in a word, crucify the flesh with the affections thereof³; we must watch, and fast, as well as pray⁴; and when we give of our wealth so give as to become sensibly the poorer for our gift. And then, if Anti-Christ shall come upon

¹ Eph. vi. 13.

² Luke xii. 35, 36.

³ Gal. v. 24.

⁴ See Sermon on Watching.

us, while we are exercised by this holy discipline, and are relying only on the merits of the SAVIOUR, and are seeking constantly the Grace of the HOLY SPIRIT in the Ordinances and Sacraments of HIS Holy Church, little will it matter to us whether we have trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment; for whether we be stoned, or torn asunder, or slain with the sword, destitute, afflicted, tormented; whether we have to wander in deserts, or in mountains, or in dens and caves of the earth¹, still these things will be borne with a patience become to us habitual, and they will only minister to our far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory². And whatever our trials may be, to us as to the martyrs of old, supernatural strength to endure them all will be vouchsafed, until suddenly the LORD shall appear, and HE shall consume that Wicked One with the SPIRIT of HIS mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of HIS coming. Yes; to go back to the joyful promises with an allusion to which I commenced; with the eye of faith to pierce the intervening cloud, and see the SUN of Righteousness about to burst upon us in all its meridian Glory; let us remember that CHRIST is

¹ Heb. xi. 36—38.² 2 Cor. iv. 17.

coming; and whether we be taken before the persecutions of Anti-Christ, or whether those persecutions shall come in our day; this is certain, that we, my Brethren, even we, we who are here assembled, you and I, shall see the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the very LORD JESUS, who suffered for us, EMANUEL, GOD with us. And, my Brethren, will it not be joy to see HIM? Will it not be joy past utterance to look upon HIM who for our sins was wounded; to gaze upon HIM, the Blessed LORD JESUS, who endured the Cross to save us, HIS people? Will it not be bliss ineffable to exclaim with Mary, as HE stands before us, RABBONI?¹ to fall down, with Thomas, at HIS feet, and say, My LORD and my GOD?² Oh! with what affection, with what earnestness of hope, do true Christian hearts look forward to that happy, blessed hour! And HE will not come alone, for if we believe that JESUS died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in JESUS will GOD bring with HIM³. And HE will change our vile body that it may be like unto HIS Glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby HE is able to subdue all things to HIMSELF. If HIS Body will be cognizable by us, our

¹ John xx. 16.² John xx. 28.³ 1 Thess. iv. 14.

body, however changed, may be recognized by others; and how vast the joy among them that will be brought with CHRIST to behold those worthies of the Old Testament and of the New—to behold the Martyrs, and Confessors, and holy men of the Church triumphant, whose graces we have loved to contemplate, with whose spirits we have long been in communion, to behold once more, and grasp in an everlasting embrace, those saints of our own household whom we have loved and lost. And, if our names be found written—GOD ALMIGHTY grant, my Brethren, that our names may be found written there!—if our names be found written in the Book of Life, then, when standing before the Judgment-Seat, we shall feel the last pang we are ever doomed to feel—the pang occasioned by seeing the record of those innumerable offences, which we have from time to time committed, the least one of which, except for the intervention of the SAVIOUR, would have hurried us into perdition—the pang occasioned by understanding, if not in their fulness, yet in a much higher degree than now, the extent of those stupendous sufferings of the Incarnate GOD, by which was blotted out the handwriting that was against us!¹ But the pang

¹ Col. ii. 14.

will be momentary, and we shall enter for ever into the joy of the LORD¹. This is the bliss which the true Christian has ever before him ; this the joy that robs of their false glare all the pleasures of this sinful world ; this his consolation when, standing by the grave of a departed friend, he prays to God that it “ may please HIM shortly to accomplish the number of his Elect, and to hasten his Kingdom.”

¹ Matt. xxv. 21.

SERMON XVI.

FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY.

1 CORINTHIANS XIII. 13.

“ And now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity, these three ; but the greatest of these is Charity.”

FAITH, Hope, Love, these are the three Principles, which form and animate the truly Christian character; not Faith without Hope, nor Hope without Faith, nor Faith and Hope without Charity or Love, nor Charity or Love without Faith and Hope—but these three. The three must be united ere the man can be saved; and, in the building up of the spiritual man, each of the three has its peculiar and distinctive office.

And, first, of Faith ; of which the distinctive office is that of justifying the Christian¹ ; or rather it is the principle through which he retains the justification which GOD for CHRIST'S sake confers, and remains acceptable in HIS sight². Hope will not justify ; Love will not justify ; but Faith only, as distinct from all other principles. But, then, Faith justifies whom ? I have already said—the Christian. The Faith that justifies is a living Faith³. But what is a living Faith ? Faith itself, as distinguished from the man in whom it exists, is nothing—it is a mere abstraction : a living Faith, then, is the Faith of a living person—a person who has Spiritual life—i. e., of a Christian. So the Apostle to the Hebrews calls upon them to “draw nigh with a true heart, in full assurance of faith”—but whom ? those whose “hearts have been sprinkled from an evil conscience,” and whose “bodies have been washed with pure water”⁴.

Hence it was not the Faith of a Jew or a Heathen that justified him : before his Faith was elevated to that office, it was considered necessary

¹ Gal. ii. 16.

² Gal. iii. 11, 24. Heb. x. 38 ; xi. 7. On this subject see Newman on Justification.

³ St. James, ii. 17, 18, 22, 26. Rom. xii. 1, 2. 2 Pet. i. 5—8.
Titus iii. 8.

⁴ Heb. x. 22.

by the Apostles that he should be made a Christian. For instance, in the second Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we read of the conversion of three thousand souls. Convinced by the preaching of St. Peter, they believed. But did St. Peter say unto them, Ye believe; that is sufficient, ye are justified by Faith? No, his exhortation was, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, for the remission of sins, and" then, but not till then, "ye shall receive the gift of the HOLY GHOST"¹. He called upon them to be baptized, because, as St. Paul teaches us, "As many as have been baptized into CHRIST have put on CHRIST"². They were called upon to be baptized that they might put on CHRIST, and by being one with CHRIST become partakers of the SPIRIT of CHRIST³. And hence we can understand St. Peter when he says, "Baptism doth now save us"⁴, a doctrine which forms one of the Articles of the Creed, where we speak of "One baptism for the remission of sins"⁵; or, as the Catechism teaches, there is one Baptism by which we are placed in a state of Salvation⁶. We are thus elected to a state of Salvation by the free,

¹ Acts ii. 38.² Gal. iii. 27.³ John xiv. 16, 17, 20.⁴ 1 Pet. iii. 21.⁵ Nicene Creed.⁶ Church Catechism, Answers II. and IV.

sovereign, unaccountable Grace of GOD¹, who has appointed Holy Baptism to be the instrument by which we shall be enrolled as servants and soldiers of his Spiritual Kingdom. But, then, as the Catechism also teaches, it does not follow that we shall continue in that state : from our position we may fall, as thousands do ; we may resist the HOLY GHOST² ; we may grieve the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD³ ; we may quench the SPIRIT⁴ ; drive HIM, that is to say, entirely, away from our souls.

We still need, then, an internal instrument, through which we may be continued in that state of Salvation to which not our merit but GOD's inscrutable mercy, as displayed towards us, has elected us. And that instrument is Faith ; for what is our LORD's promise ? " He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved " ; but then HE adds, " He that believeth not shall be damned " ⁵ : yes, even though he be baptized, yet shall he be in a state of condemnation if he ceaseth to believe ; or, in the case of those who have been baptized in infancy, if they add not Faith to Baptism when, of Faith, they are capable subjects. And why is this ? Even because Faith is that principle within

¹ Eph. i. 3, 4, 5, 11. ² Tim. i. 9. Rom. xi. 33, 34. Job, xxxiii. 13.
Deut. xxix. 29.

² Acts vii. 51.

³ Eph. iv. 30.

⁴ 1 Thess. v. 19.

⁵ St. Mark xvi. 16.

us, which is always applying to whatever we do the Merits of the One Atoning Sacrifice of CHRIST; because Faith is, by GOD, constituted the means within us, through which, by HIS SPIRIT, HE will operate upon our souls. Faith was the condition always required by our LORD when on earth, before HE performed HIS miracles of mercy. "Believest thou?"¹ was the question HE asked, virtually or in words, of each petitioner for relief; and where Faith was not, there HE could not (could not according to the order of things HE had appointed,) do any mighty work: nor was any mighty work done by HIS Apostles in HIS Name, until they saw in the object before them that he had faith to be healed². But the Miracles of our LORD in the world of nature were but types of HIS Miracles in the Kingdom of Grace. And as faith was required in the recipient of HIS mercy while HE was on earth, so is faith still required of those who seek the gifts of HIS Grace through HIS Church³.

Yes, Faith, as I have said, is the one justifying principle in each deed that we do, each Ordinance that we solemnize; Faith pleading incessantly the Grace of HIS HOLY SPIRIT. Are we labour-

¹ St. Mark ix. 29, &c.

² Acts xiv. 9.

³ Heb. xi. 6.

ing diligently in that station of life, high or low, to which GOD has called us? Is our life regular and moral? Are we kind in heart, beneficent in action? Still, every thing is so imperfect, so mixed up with sin in man, while every thing, however apparently good, is counterpoised by sins of hourly incursion—that these things cannot rescue from perdition the individuals of a race of beings sent into the world under a state of condemnation. But add Faith, pleading the merits and seeking the SPIRIT of CHRIST, and then, but not till then, these become good works; then, but not till then, they are acceptable to GOD for the sake of CHRIST¹. Do you pray? It is only the prayer of faith which is of avail²; of faith which mingles our intercessions with the intercession of the Only prevailing INTERCESSOR. Do you love to hear the Word preached? It is only profitable, then, when it is mingled with faith in them that hear it³; and by them, in whom faith exists, the very dullest sermon is made profitable. Is the HOLY EUCHARIST⁴ what the Catechism teaches,

¹ Ephesians ii. 4, 5, 8—13. John iii. 36. Romans iv. 2, 6.

² Matt. xxi. 22. James i. 6. ³ Heb. iv. 2.

⁴ “Wherefore, saith Basil, it becometh him that cometh to the Body and Blood of CHRIST, in commemoration of HIM that died and rose again, not only to be pure from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, lest he eat and drink his own condemnation; but also to show out evidently a memory of HIM that died and rose again for

the means wherein and whereby our souls are strengthened and refreshed by the body and blood of CHRIST? Yes, but only if we draw nigh with faith; without faith, (the *internal* instrument of our justification,) by having recourse to the *external* instrument, we receive not Grace but condemnation¹. Do you seek by repentance to regain the Grace you may have lost, and to be restored to a state of justification? You do well; but without faith your sorrow for the past is the remorse of Judas, not the conversion of St. Peter.

If in Baptism spiritual life is conferred, and if in the Eucharist it is sustained, Faith is that principle within us, by which what is given to us from on High, then or at any time, is received and retained. Faith is to the soul as the heart

us, in this point that he be mortified to sin and the world, to live now to GOD in CHRIST JESUS our LORD. So, then, we must show outward testimony in following the signification of CHRIST's death; amongst the which this is not esteemed least to render thanks to ALMIGHTY GOD for all His benefits, briefly comprised in the Death, Passion, and Resurrection of His Dearly Beloved SON: the which thing, because we ought chiefly at this table to solemnize, the godly Fathers named it *Eucharistia*, as if they should have said, now, above all other times, ye ought to laud and praise GOD."—*Hom. xxvii. part 2, intituled "Second part of the Homily of the worthy receiving and reverent esteeming of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ."*

¹ Cf. 1 Cor. xiii. 29; Heb. iii. 14; John vi. 63.

to the body : if the heart ceases to beat, the body dies ; the life becomes extinct : but life itself is not the consequence of the beating of the heart, it is the gift of God : nor will the heart continue to beat if we neglect the proper use of food, which is given to sustain life. Without faith we are spiritually defunct, and yet this does not preclude the necessity of our seeking spiritual sustenance in the Eucharist and other Ordinances of religion. And, again, the heart will cease to beat, and our very food cease to nourish us, if we debilitate the body by vicious habits and the excesses of sensuality ; so will faith avail nothing if we persevere in evil doing : but as, on the other hand, the body is preserved in health by wholesome exercise, so by good works the spiritual health is promoted ; as, moreover, it is the beating heart which supports our life when we are sleeping or engaged in our various occupations ; in like manner, it is by a living faith that we are still sustained in union with HIM who is our Life¹, when we happen not to be engaged in the actual offices of religion, but to be discharging our several worldly duties. Thus it is, as I have said, that a living faith gives life to all that we think or do, by connecting it with CHRIST our SAVIOUR.

¹ John xiv. 6 ; xv. 6.

But yet further: the dead body in which the heart has ceased to beat can be made to move, the hand may be made to grasp, and, by certain applications of the medical art, it may appear for a few moments to exhibit the functions of life; but all is momentary and unreal, and every thing is done at the will of another, by whose will the dead body is moved. So is it in the man in whom there is not faith; he is spiritually dead, and, moreover, he is under the power of another, even of Satan himself: the man appears to act, but he is an instrument only in the hands of his great enemy; his very virtues are but the eccentric actions of a galvanized corpse; life in him he cannot have, until faith beats once more in his heart; and faith will not there beat until he, who is thus bound hand and foot with the grave clothes of sin and misery, hear the still small voice¹, the voice of ONE Who is more than man, saying unto him, Lazarus come forth².

We see, then, that a state of justification is a state of acceptableness with God, in which we are placed and supported by Divine Grace³, and in which we live and walk by faith⁴; we see that it is the faith of a Christian which justifies, and *that*

¹ 1 Kings xix. 12.

² John xi. 42.

³ 2 Tim. i. 9. Phil. ii. 13.

⁴ Gal. ii. 20. 2 Cor. v. 7.

not of a nominal Christian but of a real Christian ; for the Apostle teaches us that they, who, whether they be baptized and profess to be Christians or not, do the works of the flesh, shall not inherit the Kingdom of GOD¹; they, therefore, are not in a state of acceptableness with the “HOLY ONE and JUST”², who is of “purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity”³. But who shall live by Faith? The just or righteous person⁴. Not that his righteousness can justify him. No, for his righteousness is no righteousness with HIM who chargeth even HIS angels with folly⁵; of HIM who is righteousness itself⁶; who seeth sin in our holiest things⁷. No, for if like Zacharias and his wife we were to “walk in all the Ordinances and Commandments of the LORD blameless”⁸, so far as man could bring any thing to our charge ; still, we should be unprofitable servants⁹, still, we should require to be redeemed by the Blood of CHRIST, still need to be cleansed by the Grace of the HOLY SPIRIT, still need to have righteousness for CHRIST’s sake, imputed as well as imparted¹⁰. And GOD does this only to

¹ Gal. v. 19—21.² Act. iii. 14.³ Hab. i. 13.⁴ Gal. iii. 11. Heb. x. 38.⁵ Job. iv. 18.⁶ 1 John ii. 1. Isaiah xlv. 24, margin.⁷ Isaiah lxiv. 6.⁸ Luke i. 6.⁹ Luke xvii. 10.¹⁰ Dan. ix. 24. Jer. xxiii. 6. Rom. i. 17.

those who have faith ; faith is the inward instrument through which these gifts are appropriated : the very insignificance of the inward and the outward means considered in themselves, (the Sacraments externally and faith internally,) being, doubtless, intended to remind us continually that, though without good works we shall cease to live, it is not by good works that we do live, but by God's unmerited mercy and inscrutable Grace. And thus the doctrine preached to us by the Cross is, not that men can be saved in their sins because they think that they have faith ; the doctrine preached by the awful sufferings of God Incarnate is, that the righteous scarcely can be saved ; and, says St. Peter, " If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear ?"¹ The doctrine, then, of justification by faith is not a doctrine to give comfort to those who wilfully transgress God's laws ; but it is a doctrine to keep humble those who strive to do His will.

And with respect to this principle of faith, as in every other respect, we are, while we remain in this world, in a state of trial. The trial is the exercise by which it thrives. When we pray ; when we attend the services of the Sanctuary ; when we kneel at the Altar, our faith is tried : for

¹ 1 Peter iv. 18.

we are not led by sense or sight; we walk by faith. We see not the sympathizing Angels around us¹; we hear not the interceding SAVIOUR, without whose intercession our prayers are but idle words²; we behold not the HOLY GHOST dispensing HIS gifts severally as HE will³; we have no vision of the Awful LORD GOD ALMIGHTY present, as HE ever is present, with us⁴; yet we are to act as if we saw and heard these unspeakable things, while Satan is trying to make us forget them or give them no heed. Sometimes the ALMIGHTY does HIMSELF, as in the case of Job, permit our faith to be more sorely tried in the furnace of affliction⁵. GOD ALMIGHTY, for HIS dear SON's sake, grant, my Brethren, that our faith may abide the fiery trial, that trial of affliction which in this world awaits all the children of GOD's love, for whom the LORD loveth HE chastiseth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth⁶. May the trying of our faith work patience⁷, and may our patience work experience, and experience hope!

¹ Luke ii. 9; xv. 10. Hebrews i. 14.

² Rom. viii. 34. Heb. vii. 25.

³ 1 Cor. xii. 11.

⁴ 2 Chron. vii. 15, 16. Matt. xviii. 20. 1 Cor. xi. 22.

⁵ Job. i. 12. ⁶ Heb. xii. 6.

⁷ James i. 3.

And it is to Hope that we must now, in the second place, advert. If Faith leads us to trust in GOD, Hope causes us to seek HIM. And here we must remark that Hope is more than a wish; we may wish for what we have no chance of obtaining, but Hope involves expectation; it is the confident expectation of some promised good. The labourer may wish for a fortune, and wish in vain; but for his wages at the end of the week he hopes: he has a right to hope for this; and yet he is not certain to obtain his pay: if he have not finished his work, probably his wages may be withheld; or his master may tell him, for some unexplained reason, it would be more convenient to pay him double wages next week; so that if Hope involves expectation, it is to be distinguished from certainty.

And now, having seen what Hope is, let us apply this principle to the subject of Prayer. GOD promises to hear¹. GOD has promised certain blessings to men who pray for them. HE even commands us in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make our requests known unto HIM²; HE encourages us, who are in CHRIST, and who are justified by Faith, to

¹ Zech. x. 6; xiii. 9. 1 John v. 15.

² Phil. iv. 6.

approach HIM as a FATHER¹, to tell HIM our wants, and to ask for whatsoever is requisite and necessary for the body as well as the soul"². But HE has not declared how or when He will grant our requests. Here, then, is room for the full exercise of hope. When, doing as GOD commands, we bend our knees and lift up our hearts in prayer for a blessing, we expect to receive it; but we are not certain to receive it; no—we hope for it. If we always received what we ask for, immediately on our asking, and in the very way we desire, as to our hope we should cease to be on our trial; but on our trial we are, not less with respect to our hope than with respect to our faith³. On the one hand, GOD promises, for CHRIST's sake, always to hear us when we ask; but when HE commands us not only to ask but to seek, and not only to seek but to knock, to be urgent in prayer⁴, HE, on the other hand, would have us infer that HE may not grant what we desire at once. And this, too, we know from experience.

You, my Brethren, you who are accustomed to pray earnestly, and then watch for the result, you know how very, very often your petitions are

¹ Rom. viii. 14—17.

² Exhortation—Daily Service. Luke xi. 3. Matt. vii. 7.

³ Rom. viii. 24.

⁴ St. Luke xi. 9, 10.

granted in the most marvellous manner ; and yet you know also that they are sometimes apparently disregarded for a time, being granted when, and in a manner, you least expected ; sometimes they are denied, as far as we can see, altogether. We are to approach GOD as we would have our children to approach us, and HE dealeth with us as we act towards our children. “ What man is there of you,” says our SAVIOUR, “ whom, if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone ? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent ?”¹ And we may carry the comparison a little further ; we will suppose a father to have grasped a serpent by the throat, and that the child, unconscious of the brilliant reptile’s venomous tooth, should entreat to have it granted as a plaything ; the child, in making the request, would only be acting on that principle of hope which the father has encouraged, but, in this instance, would the father grant the request ? Most assuredly not ; and yet as assuredly he would not intend, by disappointing his child’s hope in one case, to prevent his expressing his wishes on other occasions. Now, with respect to the things which are conducive to our real happiness, we are as ignorant as the most ignorant child². And if we ask that which GOD foresees would

¹ Matt. vii. 9, 10.² Rom. viii. 26. James iv. 3.

interfere with, instead of promoting, our happiness, it is surely the part of mercy, as well as of wisdom, to withhold the glittering serpent, because of the poisoned fang. But this ought not to prevent our hoping, when next we pray ; still less should it lead us to the false humility of saying, “ Because we know not what to ask for as we ought, we will ask for nothing, and leave all to God ”—the specious excuse of prayerless men. For it is both our privilege and our duty to make our wants known unto our Heavenly FATHER ; and we know not how many blessings may be withheld from us, because, lacking the virtues of Faith and Hope, we have not asked for them. Verily, if our prayers were always, and visibly, answered, how crowded would our Sanctuaries (turned into a kind of market-place) become ; but our Sanctuaries are not crowded, because they now admit those, and only those, to the blessings there imparted, who walk by faith, and look to things unseen and future with hope.

We have spoken of Prayer generally. Take the instance of a particular prayer. A dear friend is sick: From that bed of sickness he can be raised by HIM with whom there is no word impossible¹, even when all human skill is vain :

¹ Jer. xxxii. 17. Matt. viii. 8.

GOD has promised to hear the prayers of the righteous¹, especially for the sick². You, therefore, pray; you call for the clergy to pray, you ask for the prayers of the Church, and you do so in hope that GOD, who has promised to grant the petitions made in HIS SON'S name, will grant your's, even your's. If you have not hope, you will not pray; but the very fact that you have only hope implies that it is possible your prayer may not be granted. I speak probably in the presence of some who have thus, and at such time, prayed, and have, in answer to their prayer, received back, as it were by miracle, from the grave, some dear object of their fondest love. I am sure that every parish priest can name many such instances. But we will suppose that the prayer is not granted; we will suppose that the dear one, for whom we have wept and prayed, is gradually sinking; we will suppose that, worn down with sickness, his hours, his minutes, may be counted: are we then to pray for him? Yes; commending his soul into the hands of GOD as of a faithful CREATOR and most merciful SAVIOUR³, we are to pray that it may be precious in GOD'S sight; that it may be "washed in the blood of the Immaculate LAMB that was slain to take away

¹ Prov. xv. 8, 29. James v. 16.

² James v. 15.

³ Psalm xxxi. 5. Heb. ii. 17. 1 Pet. iv. 19.

the sins of the world¹; that whatsoever defilements it may have contracted in the midst of this miserable and naughty world, through the lusts of the flesh or the wiles of Satan, being purged and done away², it may be presented pure and without spot before God³: but we are not to pray for his longer continuance here; and why? Even because GOD, by the increase of his malady, notwithstanding our prayers, has already signified that it is not the Divine Will; and this, therefore, is no longer a legitimate subject of hope; and without hope there may be praise, and there may be the pious complainings of the heart pouring itself out to its Heavenly FATHER—but there cannot be prayer.

And this suggests to us that Hope is not only the encouragement, it is also the limitation of prayer. For what we are privileged to hope, for that we are privileged to pray; but for nothing else: and we are privileged to hope for those things which GOD, by HIS PROVIDENCE or by HIS GRACE, has placed within our reach, but for nothing more. For instance, it would be absurd for a peasant to pray that he might become a

¹ Psalm li. 2, 7. John i. 29. Rev. i. 5; v. 9.

² Eph. vi. 11. 1 Pet. v. 8. Heb. viii. 12.

³ Visitation of Sick.—Book of Common Prayer. Cf. Col. i. 21, 22. Jude 24, 25.

prince ; for he could have no right to hope for this, this not being an end which God has placed within his reach. But from the God who has placed him in the sphere of a peasant, he is privileged to hope for all the blessings which belong to that sphere of life ; he may legitimately try to become one of the foremost of that order of men which forms a country's pride ; or he may labour, if means of advancement are providentially placed within his reach, to improve his condition, by following step by step, as PROVIDENCE leads : what he may labour for he may hope for, what he may hope for that he ought to pray for. Or to pass on to things spiritual. We are not to expect the miraculous gifts with which the Apostles were endowed : for this we cannot hope, and therefore we may not pray ; for we have no right to pray for what we are not privileged to hope for. But we are privileged to hope for those spiritual miracles, which, compared with the things of nature, are as marvellous as the conversion of stone into flesh : for the conversion of man's hard heart to holiness—for this we are privileged to labour by self-discipline and self-denial ; and since, as prayer without exertion and self-denial is mockery, so exertion and self-denial without prayer are presumption ; for this we are privileged to pray, and, if to pray, then to hope.

Thus it is with Hope, as with Faith, that we have recourse to each Ordinance of the Church, expecting on the observance of each Ordinance, or the reception of each Sacrament, to receive the particular Grace, whatever it may be, which God has attached thereto ; making it to be the means of conveying His blessing, not to all men, but to those who, leading a life of penitence, are justified by faith. And Hope, too, comforts us with the assurance that, when with faithful and penitent hearts we have had recourse to the means prescribed, we have partaken of the Grace, even though we have experienced no peculiar excitement of the feelings. For it is on God that our hope rests. HE has promised to confer His gifts on penitent and faithful men, resorting to the appointed means ; and, therefore, if with penitence and faith we have drawn nigh, we feel sure that we have received the promised gift in such proportion as our need requires, even though the proof of this shall not be exhibited till a future time.

And great, too, are the joys of Hope : like Faith it is employed on unseen realities around us ; like Faith, too, it is busied about the future ; it penetrates the world beyond the grave ; it soars above all Creation, until it reaches the Throne of

the ETERNAL¹, where it ultimately centres : there it rests on the purest of all objects ; there it has access to the purest of all sources ; there it realizes the purest of all pleasures ; there it exercises the purest of affections, Charity or Love.

And now, thirdly and lastly, on Charity or Love a few observations must be made ; and the time warns me that, on this exhaustless subject, they must be few. Love will not justify us. No, it is by Faith that we are justified, as it is by Hope, when Faith is in us, that we seek union with God through his Sacraments and Ordinances ; but still Love is necessary to our Salvation, since it is by Love that Faith worketh². Unless Faith is working by Love, Faith is not the Faith which justifies. Have you, then, Faith to be justified ? Yes, if you have Faith working by Love. No, if your Faith be without Works, for Faith without Works is dead³. Yes, if you have Faith, at God's command, to sacrifice, like Abraham, your dearest worldly interests⁴. No, if while you have Faith to hear the Prophet when he tells you to put away the guilty Herodias, you still listen to her blandishments⁵. No, if your

¹ Col. i. 27. 1 Tim. i. 1.

² Gal. v. 6.

³ James ii. 26.

⁴ Gen. xxii. 9, 10.

⁵ Mark vi. 16, 20, 26.

Faith is the Faith of a sluggard¹. Yes, if your Faith be like the principle of vegetation from which the ear of corn is found to spring—a vital principle which adds to itself virtue, and knowledge, and temperance, and patience, and godliness, and brotherly kindness, and charity or love²; that love, which, kindled in our hearts by God the HOLY GHOST HIMSELF, which, enlightened by a knowledge of all that God has done for our souls, and penetrated by a deep abiding sense of the mystery of Redeeming Mercy, delights to honour God with the best member, the best gifts, the best feelings we have; that love, which, raised by God from earth to Heaven, returns to earth again in a fertilizing shower, to benefit our neighbour and our kind; the Church directly; and, indirectly³, all among whom the Church stands a burning and a shining light, the candlestick of the LORD⁴.

Thus may we understand what the Apostle means when he says, “Now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity, these three; but the greatest of these is Charity”, or Love. Not that Love can exist without Faith or without Hope, as an Infidel, with kind feelings, would have us infer. No,

¹ Prov. xiii. 4.

² 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7.

³ Gal. vi. 10.

⁴ Rev. i. 20.

Love or Charity, in the Christian sense, cannot exist without the pre-existence of Faith and Hope: Faith to keep us in a state of justification, Hope to make us waiters upon GOD in His Sacraments and Ordinances: but Love is the result; it is what has resulted from our Faith and our Hope, or rather from that Grace of GOD which gave us Faith and Hope, and blessed the culture of them to the production of fruit more precious than they, and more lasting too. More lasting: for “whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away”¹. In Heaven, when we shall know even as we are known², we shall need no Prophets to forewarn us of what we shall foresee as well as they; we shall need no longer the instruction of the wise, there, in that new Jerusalem, where the “Glory of GOD shall lighten it, and the LAMB be the light thereof”³. But this unfailing virtue of Charity or Love, this frame of mind, by which we seek, like the Great GOD Himself, to advance the Glory of the CREATOR by promoting the real welfare of the creature, will animate us in eternity as well as in time, and prepare us to share not only the bliss

¹ 1 Cor. xiii. 8.² 1 Cor. xiii. 12.³ Rev. xxi. 23.

but also the employments of those high spiritual existences, who, encircling the Throne of Glory, stand ever ready, at their MAKER's behest, either to guard the Mansions of the Just from the approach of evil¹, or to spread happiness through surrounding worlds². It was the perfection of Love which brought down the SON of GOD to earth³; and it is by the exercise of Love that those, whom a loving SAVIOUR hath redeemed, will be uplifted to Heaven⁴.

How animating these expressions! and, by their very animation, I trust that they are profitable. But, alas! my Brethren, when we come to examine our hearts—how deficient in love, real, disinterested love, do they appear to be! How selfish! how given to the things not of GOD but of ourselves! though, if we be GOD's, all things are our's⁵. Yes, even though we meditate in solemn silence, day by day, and night by night, upon all the mercies of Redemption, designed, achieved, administered by GOD the HOLY TRINITY: on the gentleness, the forbearance, the Agony, the Passion of our Blessed SAVIOUR; on HIS Grace vouchsafed to us: yet when we

¹ Psalm xxxiv. 7.

² Psalm ciii. 21.

³ Rom. v. 8. 1 John iii. 16.

⁴ Eph. iii. 17. Rom. xiii. 10.

⁵ 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. 1 Tim. vi. 17.

go forth into the busy world—that noisy, wicked world from which the meditative mind would shrink¹—when we go forth, compelled by duty, to prove our love by our deeds², still how deficient in love do we find ourselves to be; how sadly sensible do we become that, if on works we were to rely, by our works we should be condemned³; that condemned, indeed, we should be, if God were extreme to mark what is done amiss⁴. But here, again, Faith and Hope come in to cheer us. There are persons to whom faith is counted for righteousness⁵. And who are they? Not those who do the deeds or think the thoughts of darkness: the whole of this discourse has shown the contrary. But they who thus endeavour to love God above all things, and for the love of God, in all things, strive to do His will. To them it is that the Lord saith, It is true, indeed, that you are not pure and holy, and so complete in love as those sinless creatures are, who never fell, and who stand around My Throne⁶: it is true, that if you were dealt with according to your deserts, you could not stand before My Holiness, which is in itself

¹ John xv. 19; xvii. 14. James iv. 4.

² John vi. 6.

³ Gal. ii. 16.

⁴ Jer. x. 24. Psalm vi. 1; cxliii. 2.

⁵ Gen. xv. 6. Psalm cvi. 31. Heb. xi. 7.

⁶ Rev. v. ii.

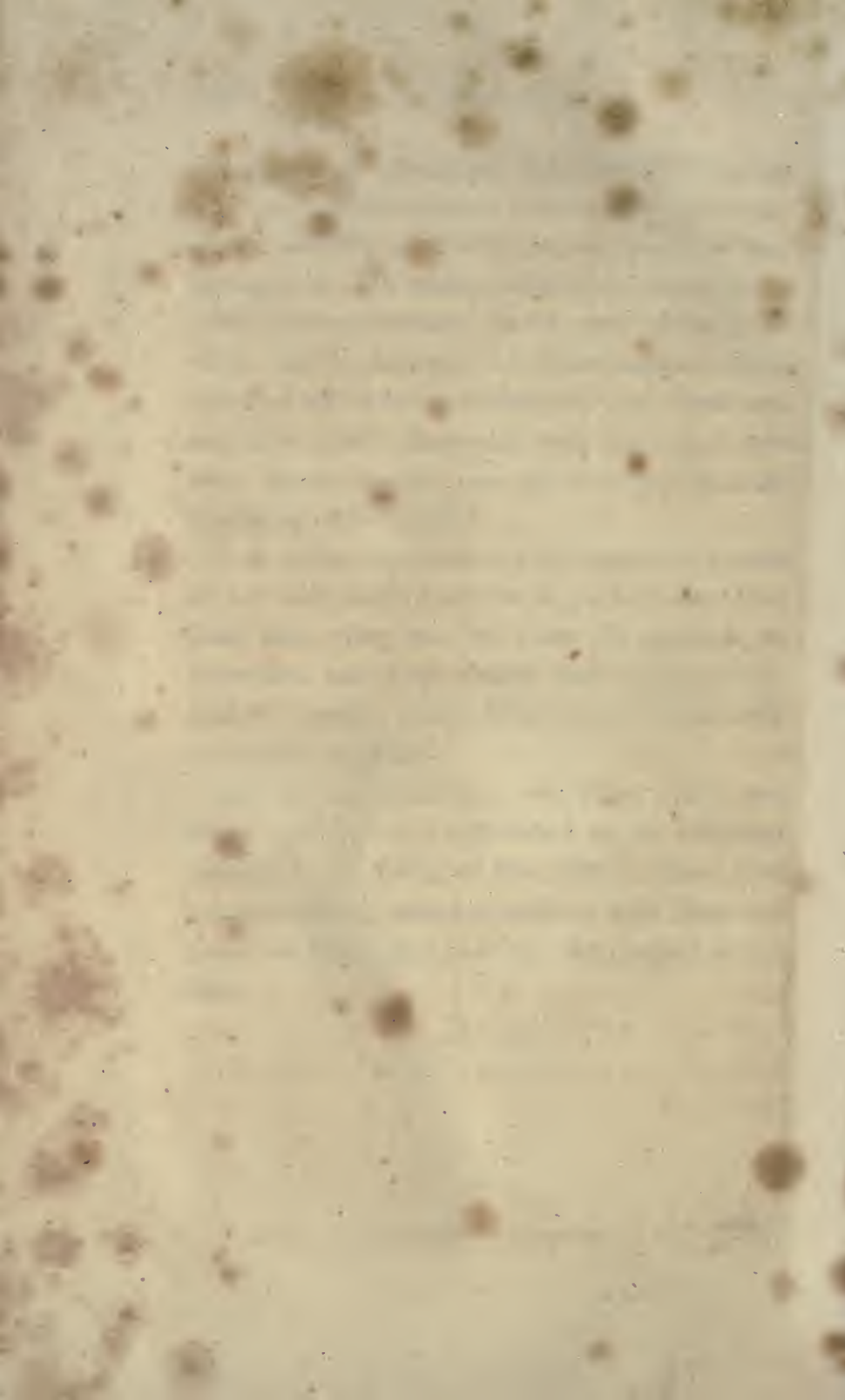
destruction, a consuming fire to every thing in which unholiness is found¹: but you are in CHRIST JESUS, and HIS spirit is in you, and you have that principle of faith which, acted upon, can do great things through Grace: be of good cheer, your faith shall be counted for righteousness, and I will deal with you, and visit you, and bless you, and have communion with you, even as if you were already—what you are not yet, but are preparing to be—perfect.

It is to those only who are striving to be perfect as our Heavenly FATHER is perfect that God deals thus: they have in them the principle of perfection, and God counts that to be accomplished already, which HIS Grace will actually accomplish hereafter.

And so, my Brethren, you see how Faith, and Hope, and Love, are intertwined in the Christian character: and God, of HIS Mercy, grant, that we may abound more and more in these three—in Faith, in Hope, and in Love, the greatest of the three.

¹ Deut. iv. 24.





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